

BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 25 JUNE 2014  
1:15 PM IN HARDY TEACHING ROOM 1

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**Council members present:**

Mr David Babb  
Dr Kevin Brown  
The Very Rev'd Philip Buckler  
Mr Jamie Caress  
Mr David Clements  
Ms Angela Crowe  
Mr Richard Corn  
Mrs Sandra Gratrix  
Mr David Head  
Dr Tony Hill  
AVM Gavin Mackay  
Ms Haf Merrifield  
Mr Graham Meeson  
Professor Jayne Mitchell  
Mr Roger Mosey (Chair)  
Rev'd Sally Myers  
Rev Professor Peter Neil  
Dr Jim Smith  
Mrs Bridget Starling  
Professor Mark Thompson  
Mr James Turner  
Mrs Lucy Wood

**In attendance:**

Mr Nigel Appleton, Dean of School of Teacher Development  
Mr Stephen Deville, Director of Resources  
Rev'd Peter Green, University Chaplain (for item 17 only)  
Mr Rob Jones, Director of Enterprise  
Dr Graham Killey, Planning and Performance Manager (to observe)  
Mr Nick Roberts, Students' Union Vice President 2013/14  
Dr Ruth Sayers, Dean of School of Culture, Education & Innovation  
Mrs Katie Skilton, Clerk to the University Council  
Ms Emma Smeaton, Officer to the University Council

**1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed new Council members; Angela Crowe, David Head and Gavin Mackay to their first meeting of the University Council. Dr Grahame Killey, the new Planning and Performance Manager was also in attendance as an observer for the meeting.

The Chair thanked the Council members that had attended extended Council meetings at the University; including the FE&GP Strategy meeting and the Audit meeting which included an additional discussion on data. The outcomes of these would be covered later on the agenda.

Thanks were RECORDED to the following people who were attending their last meeting:

- James Turner, Student Governor was graduating from BGU and would be replaced by Jack Downey.
- Nick Roberts, would be leaving his role as Students' Union Vice President Voice. Jamie Caress, the current Students' Union President would be taking on this role for the next academic year and the new Students' Union President would be Chris Robertson.
- Lucy Wood, lay member of University Council would not be continuing with a second term due to work commitments.
- Nigel Appleton, Dean of School of Teacher Development would be retiring at the end of the academic year.
- Haf Merrifield, Deputy Vice Chancellor: Strategy & Performance would be leaving the University in July for a new role as Head of Undergraduate Admissions at the University of Nottingham.

**2. The University Prayer**

Rev. Professor Peter Neil led the University Prayer.

**3. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Bishop Christopher Lowson and Mrs Jasmit Phull.

**4. Declarations of interest**

Tony Hill declared that he was a member of the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership, which is mentioned in the Strategy papers.

**5. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2014**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 13 March 2014 were APPROVED as a true record of the meeting and the Chair was authorised to sign them.

**6. Matters arising**

(i) Action points

Item 15(iii)b Key items from sub-committees – FE&GP Committee – Maximum and minimum target range (financial KPIs)

The Director of Resources would report on this at the next FE&GP Committee.

**DoR**

(ii) Any other matters

It was NOTED that a University Fellowship had been accepted by BGU graduate and Paralympian Jade Etherington.

Members AGREED that it was not appropriate at the present time to review individual KPIs. Once the Strategy was in place, the Planning and Performance Manager would bring further information for discussion at Council of which KPIs should be reported on in future.

**GK**

**7. Vice Chancellor's business**

The Vice Chancellor presented his report outlining the position of the University. The following points were highlighted:

- Higher Education Funding Council for England;  
The University was not at increased risk according to HEFCE who confirmed they would not change the University's rating. A report on the money recovered from re-opening the file would go to the next Council meeting in September. Members NOTED that BGU was still ranked 4-5 in the top 10 for financial positions of universities in the UK.
- Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted);  
The focused monitoring inspection for phonics resulted in the outcome, 'requires improvement'. The Dean of School of Teacher Development REPORTED that a full inspection was expected around one year from the date of the focused inspection which allowed for time to improve on any issues flagged as requiring improvement. The outcome did not affect the University's overall grade of outstanding.

**Next meeting**

Interim arrangements were in place for the retirement Dean of School of Teacher Development and it was estimated that the new post holder would be in place by Christmas. The Deputy Vice Chancellor: Academic would work with the Dean of School of Teacher Development to create the first action plan and implementation would start as soon as possible.

Following further discussion it was REPORTED that the question of whether a teaching qualification in Higher Education should be a requirement would be discussed at Academic Enhancement Committee on 9 July and reported back to the Council meeting in September.

JM

- The Vice Chancellor NOTED the valuable contributions made by the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Strategy & Performance and the Dean of School of Teacher Development who were both leaving the University in the summer.
- The University of Leicester's agreement to remain our research degree awarding university for a further 3 years was NOTED.
- There had been an 87% response rate to the National Student Survey and results would be published on 1 August 2014. The University's own student survey results showed that 92% of students were satisfied.
- The Director of Enterprise REPORTED that the graduation ceremonies on 23 July would be followed by lunch and afternoon tea at the University with a Lincolnshire Picnic theme.

#### **8. Chair's items**

A vacancy for a member of University Council on the Sponsorship Board was NOTED and members were asked to contact the Clerk following the meeting if they were interested in joining the Board.

The following new sub-committee memberships were NOTED:

- David Head – Governance & Nominations Committee;
- Gavin Mackay and Stephen Lawrence – FE&GP Committee;
- Angela Crowe – Audit Committee and Remuneration Committee;
- Mark Thompson would also be joining Remuneration Committee and would continue with his current role on the FE&GP Committee;
- Jasmit Phull on the Selection Committee in addition to her role on the Governance and Nominations Committee.

The Chair REPORTED overall congratulations to members of SLT for generally achieving their targets but NOTED that concerns regarding Ofsted and data etc. still remain in focus for Council. More Robust institutional targets would be included for the next academic year.

#### **9. The Role of Council Members - Refresh**

Members RECEIVED and NOTED the refresh paper on the roles and responsibilities of Council members. Members were asked to contact the Clerk outside the meeting with any questions regarding these.

**10. Students' Union**

The Student's Union President presented his report. The Chair thanked the Students' Union on behalf of the University Council for their work and engagement with people of the University.

**11. Risk register**

This would be discussed as part of item 12 on the agenda.

**12. Strategy & budget**

(i) University Strategy

The Vice Chancellor REPORTED that following the University Council's endorsement of the direction of travel of the Strategy at its last meeting, resource and cost implications, scenarios and a detailed narrative on budget had been worked through and were available to members of Council. The following points were NOTED following recommendation by the FE&GP Committee:

- The removal of the student number cap presented an uncertain landscape in terms of recruitment though also provided further opportunities to recruit traditional full-time, undergraduate students, as such BGU would seek to recruit as many undergraduate students in 2015 as possible.
- Work on the portfolio will be completed by July and recommendations would be implemented within the next 12 months.
- The target of up to 5,000 students should be amended to read 'at least 4500 students' and such targets etc. would be reviewed on an annual basis by the University Council.
- The University's level of borrowing required was acceptable.
- Research was an investment and was required to support scholarships and staff supervision.
- Following discussion over the balance in wording between teaching led and research informed, it was AGREED that the wording generally reflected the direction of the Strategy, high quality teaching which was research informed.
- The focussed areas of research to invest in were matched to the portfolio.

- Council members noted that the financial projections allowed for the strategy implementation to be flexible subject to changing circumstances, and annual review would ensure that there was a combination of long-term strategic development with financial prudence.

The University Council ENDORSED the proposed Strategy subject to annual review.

(ii) University budget

Members received the budget and financial forecasts presented by the Director of Resources and NOTED the following:

- A deficit was forecast for 2014/15 and 2015/16 which was required in order to grow the Strategy. Short term borrowing would be discussed with the FE&GP at the appropriate time.
- The outcomes of the various budget scenarios were presented to Council including adjustments.
- A full campus review around the usage of the University's estate and office space would be conducted as part of the Strategy.

The University Council ENDORSED the 2014/15 budget and NOTED the financial projections. Congratulations and thanks to all involved in working on the Strategy were RECORDED.

(iii) Ltd. Company

The Council RECEIVED the Ltd. Company Budget which had been approved by Audit Committee.

**13. Key performance indicators**

The Deputy Vice Chancellor: Strategy & Performance introduced the key performance indicators and her paper on student recruitment. Members NOTED the current state of progress and highlighted the following:

- Retention in post graduate programmes remained under review.
- The Deputy Vice Chancellor: Academic and the Planning and Performance Manager would review the presentation of the risk register. It was AGREED that risk appetite would be a future agenda item for Council.
- Following a report by the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Strategy & Performance it was confirmed that the Senior Leadership team regularly monitored student recruitment ~~on a fortnightly basis~~. The FE&GP Committees also received regular reports.

**Future  
agenda item**

#### **14. Key items from sub-committees**

(i) FE&GP Committee

The minutes of the FE&GP Committee meeting held on 10 June 2014 were RECEIVED.

Council ENDORSESED the recommended fee increase to £9k.

(a) Strategy & budget – This was discussed under item 12.

(ii) Audit Committee

The minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 18 June were TABLED.

(a) Data (**RESTRICTED BUSINESS**)

(iii) Governance & Nominations Committee

The minutes of the Governance & Nominations Committee meeting held on 28 May 2014 were RECEIVED.

(a) Sub-committee membership – this was noted under item 8 of the agenda.

(b) Statement of Primary Responsibilities

It was NOTED that the Statement of Primary Responsibilities was endorsed by the Governance and Nominations Committee and was now available on the University website.

#### **15. Senate**

The minutes of the meeting of Senate held on 4 June 2014 were RECEIVED. The Vice Chancellor highlighted the enhanced periodic review of Library Service.

#### **16. BG (Lincoln) Ltd.**

The minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors held on 26 March 2014 and 4 June 2014 were RECEIVED.

#### **17. Chaplain's report**

The University Chaplain attended for this item and presented his report. In addition to his report he NOTED that the Chaplaincy were trying to develop a network for Christian business owners and entrepreneurs with the first meeting scheduled for October. The Vice Chancellor NOTED that the work the Chaplain and his team did for the University set BGU apart from all other universities.

**18. Agenda suggestions for future meetings**

- Risk Reporting

Members were asked to e-mail the Clerk with any suggestions for future agenda items.

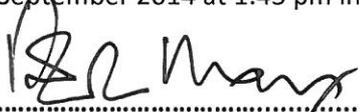
**19. Any other business**

The Chair reminded those members who did not have a biography or photograph published on the University website to submit these as soon as possible to the Clerk or the Governance Officer.

The Chair NOTED the exemplary level of participation of Council members, thanking new and departing members in particular for their contributions.

**20. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the University Council would take place on Tuesday 30 September 2014 at 1:45 pm in Hardy Teaching Room 1.

Signed .....  ..... Date 30/9/14 .....