



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of the meeting held on

11 February 2015

at 2.30pm at Newton Park

<u>Present</u>	Ms J Henderson [Chair] Professor R Alexander Mr W Archer Dr K Doern Ms A Edson Ms T Fisk Ms L Fleming	Mr M Francis Mr B Galliver Ms R Heald Lady T Lloyd Mr T Osborne Professor C Slade [Vice-Chancellor]
<u>In attendance</u>	Mr C Ellicott [Clerk] Mr R Armstrong-Haworth Professor P Davies Mr T Foot Mr N Latham	Professor T Middleton Dr D Newport-Peace [Deputy Clerk] Professor N Sammells Ms A Stone Mr J White [until item 14/28]
<u>Apologies</u>	Ms N Campbell Professor P Martin	Revd E Mason Mr D Pester

14/23 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 NOVEMBER 2015

The minutes were agreed as correct, subject to minor typographical amendments.

14/24 MATTERS ARISING

14/09: The requirement to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the Board was further reinforced by the new CUC Code of Conduct. It was agreed that it would be advantageous for the review to be conducted in June to coincide with the next full meeting of the Board and its sub-committees.

14/10: The Abridged HEFCE memorandum had been circulated to members by the Clerk.

14/25 CHAIR'S BUSINESS

Appointment of University Chancellor:

The working group considering the appointment of University Chancellor was due to meet later in the day and would advise the Board of progress in identifying a suitable nominee.

Communication with Board members:

The Chair said she was keen to maintain communication with and among Board members between formal meetings and would welcome Board members' thoughts on how best to achieve this.

14/26 CLERK'S BUSINESS: CUC CODE OF GOVERNANCE [Paper G826]

The Board considered the new CUC Higher Education Code of Governance. Governors sought clarification on their accountability, and noted that there were a number of formal and informal stakeholders including regulatory authorities, the Privy Council, the Charities Commission and, not least, students. Governors commented on the importance of a consistent approach to governance across the University's activities, for example around ethical behaviour, on which the University had an agreed policy, and enquired how ongoing assurance could best be provided. It was agreed that this would be taken forward by the Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, with support from the Director of the Vice-Chancellor's Office and the University Solicitor. Issues of compliance and reputational impact would be considered.

The Board agreed that the Clerk be asked to consider the new Code, in discussion with the Chair and the Vice-Chancellor, and bring a paper to the Board at its meeting in June with recommendations for action as necessary.

14/27 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT [Paper G827]

The Vice-Chancellor introduced her report noting that the strategic context was now even more complex than at the time of writing. New advice on Government counter-terrorism policy had been received overnight, highlighting the responsibility of Universities to balance vigilance with freedom of speech. Governors noted that the British Academy had expressed concern about the lack of distinction in policy statements between violent and non-violent forms of terrorism (<http://www.britac.ac.uk/news/news.cfm/newsid/1215>). The Vice-Chancellor highlighted the evolving role of HEFCE as lobbyist and regulator and emphasised the strong dialogue between the University and the University and College Admissions Service (UCAS).

14/28 INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT UPDATE [Paper G827A]

The Director of International Relations introduced the report, drawing attention to the continued strong performance by the International Relations team. While the University was starting to gain recognition in the international market, competition remained fierce and sustained growth had been hard won. The Director highlighted the geographical extent of the recruitment effort and noted that transnational education (TNE) offered opportunities for future growth.

In discussion, Governors welcomed the successes achieved by the International Relations team. They also noted the wider implications of internationalisation including the need to be clear on the University's underpinning ethical framework. The Vice-Chancellor advised that

increasing international student numbers was key to creating an international campus community and global networks for all students. A more rigorous approach to marketing, for both home and overseas students had also been advocated by the Head of UCAS. Governors observed that the some international students came into the British education system from other pedagogical contexts and might require additional support to develop their learning style. Staff advised that the International Relations Team worked closely with schools to encourage integration through language exchanges and cultural events. The numbers of international students recruited by Bath Spa were modest by comparison with larger institutions and it was still possible to personalise recruitment, induction and support to meet individual needs, though there was a risk that further significant growth might compromise the University's ability to maintain such a personalised service.

14/29 DEVELOPMENT OF BSU STRATEGY TO 2020 [Paper G828]

The Head of Strategy introduced the paper, noting that the focus of work had been further refined since the time of writing. Five areas of focus were being progressed, to lead into strategic discussions at the Governors' away day in April. There were: 1) Graduate Attributes; 2) Curriculum development; 3) Research and creative practice; 4) Internationalisation and market development; 5) Staffing and workforce development. Working groups led by the Chief Operating Officer would develop operational and estates strategies to support the University's academic vision. The Vice-Chancellor outlined how she anticipated exploring the strategy with Governors at the away day, through presentations and themed 'speed dating' sessions. The lunchtime slot would focus on Development. The Head of Strategy advised that consultation on the developing strategy was ongoing with staff and students.

The Deputy-Vice Chancellor gave further detail of work in development to explore the distinctive attributes of future Bath Spa University Graduates. Governors observed that this concept was increasingly evident across the higher education sector and that it would be important to ensure that the strategy was able to deliver real outcomes, over and above the marketing rhetoric. The importance of developing a limited number of memorable attributes was noted and a tension was observed between the notions of liberating and moulding students' minds. The President of the Students' Union emphasised the need for such a strategy to focus on more than just the intellectual mind, urging the University to prioritise a sense of balance and integration for all students.

14/30 STUDENT RECRUITMENT 2014/15 AND APPLICATIONS FOR 2015 ENTRY [Paper G829]

The Registrar confirmed the strong 2014 student intake. UCAS applications data for 2015 indicated a very strong performance by Bath Spa compared with the sector as a whole and the UCAS comparator group. If the rate of conversion were maintained at the current level, the 2015/16 intake could be expected to grow. The Registrar explained that competitor institutions listed by UCAS reflected where else our applicants applied. The competitor set included increasingly well-regarded and geographically distant institutions, such as Manchester Metropolitan University. The Vice-Chancellor observed that competitors were increasingly making unconditional offers to strong applicants, rather than waiting for the outcome of A level examinations. Demand from applicants outside the UK was strong and there was significant interest in the new BA in Film, Television and Digital Production. Renamed programme pathways in Education and Biology were also attracting increased

numbers of applicants, indicating the potential impact of reviewing the names of programmes, as well as good results in the most recent national student survey.

14/31 RESEARCH STRATEGY – UPDATE [Paper G830]

The Vice-Provost presented the report on REF 2014 outcomes and performance against the University's research strategy objectives to 2015. Improved performance was shown where investment had been made, such as in academic staff in English and Creative Writing. Overall REF 2014 results showed improvement for Bath Spa, and for the sector as a whole. Output quality had improved in all BSU submissions with the exception of History. The research environment had been identified as an area for improvement, notwithstanding growth of PhD cohorts in Creative Writing, Creative Computing and Music. The recent visit by a significant international trade delegation highlighted increased internal and external appetite for international research and development collaborations. Confidential feedback from the assessment panels identified the University's strong public engagement and policy influence, particularly in the field of Communication, Culture and Media Studies. Governors expressed interest in knowing more about the University's public engagement partners. The Vice-Provost advised that there was increasing activity to engage the public in shaping the University's research agenda and highlighted the strong internal partnership with the Development Office.

It was agreed that information about public engagement partners would be circulated ahead of the June meeting.

14/32 STRATEGY FOR CYBER SECURITY BASED ON ISO 27000 [Paper G831]

The Chief Operating Officer introduced the paper advising that a risk assessment and penetration testing had been conducted. In discussion, Governors noted useful overlap with the recent internal audit on data security. It was observed that the internal threat to data/cyber security could be significant and that this was particularly the case in institutions offering programmes in Computer Science.

The Board noted the report on cyber security preparedness and risk assessment, together with the University's plans to develop its security arrangements further.

14/33 INSTITUTIONAL RISK MANAGEMENT [Paper G832]

The report on institutional risk management was received. In discussion, Governors noted the need to consider the wider, reputational implications of strategic partnerships and ensure that due diligence was undertaken to mitigate the risk of failing to act properly. Referring to international partnerships, the Vice-Chancellor emphasised the importance of a sensitive and respectful approach to other cultures and regulatory frameworks, and the need for diplomacy alongside due diligence and compliance with QAA requirements. The Head of Strategy noted that additional detail of existing control mechanisms would be appended to future iterations of the institutional risk register, as recommended by the recent internal audit of risk management arrangements. Concluding, the Chair observed that the issues raised were likely to be the subject of further discussion, for example at the Board's strategy away day in April.

14/34 STUDENTS' UNION ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14 [Paper G833]

The President of the Student's Union presented his report, highlighting long term challenges in managing expenditure, and increased investment by the University. Governors acknowledged the significant progress made to rebalance the Union's finances.

14/35 STAFF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY REPORT [Paper G834]

The Director of Human Resources introduced the report, highlighting issues in relation to the proportion of senior staff who are female and the age profile of staff across the University. Strategies to address these issues would be explored further in the context of developing the University's new "People" strategy. A correction to the data on p.10 was noted.

The two new co-opted staff Governors were both on the University's new Developing Leaders programme. Ms Edson reported that the content of the programme had been useful to her, as she had been appointed from outside the HE sector. Dr Doern had found the University-wide focus of the programme particularly useful, and had valued the opportunity to spend time thinking about the bigger picture, rather than the day to day detail of work in the University.

The report was noted. Governors were asked to complete the Equality Monitoring form and return it to the Director of Human Resources by 27th February. The information collected would be held confidentially and any reporting and monitoring would be anonymous.

14/36 ANNUAL REPORT OF COMPLAINTS 2013/14 [Paper G835]

The Director of the Vice-Chancellor's Office presented the report and the annual letter from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. A review of the complaints policy was now due. Governors noted the report and acknowledged the workload behind the data.

14/37 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY GROUP – TERMS OF REFERENCE [Paper G836]

As Chair of the Development Strategy Group, Lady Lloyd advised the Board of its formation, noting that the group would meet for the first time the following day and would consider the proposed terms of reference. The Development Strategy Group would work in an advisory capacity to guide the direction of development activity and to embed a culture of philanthropic investment and engagement across the University. The Group would seek to engage external members in the long term. Further information about the Group's work would be shared at the Governors' away day in April.

The Board noted the formation of the group and its proposed terms of reference.

14/38 ITEMS FOR RECEIPT

The following items were received:

Academic Board minutes of 22nd July 2014 and 4th November 2014

Policy & Resources minutes of 25th June 2014 and 28th August 2014
Audit minutes of 5th February 2014.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 4.10 pm.

Dr Diana Newport-Peace
Deputy Clerk to the Board of Governors
12 February 2015

Signed as a record of confirmed minutes by:

Ms Jane Henderson *Jane Henderson* ..
Chair
Date *1 July 2015*