



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

University
Secretary's
Office.

Minutes Meeting of the Senate

Date: 19 October 2016

Present: The Vice-Chancellor, in the Chair
Ms S Allen, Professor K Ayscough, Professor M Bateman, Professor P Bath, Professor J Biggins, Dr L Blank, Dr M Butler, Professor H Campbell, Mrs K Campbell-Pilling, Ms S Cavasin, Professor N Clarke, Ms Claire Conway, Dr J Crockford, Professor P Crowther, Ms A Day, Professor J Derrick, Professor H Dobson, Professor S Fitzmaurice, Professor J Flint, Professor J Grasby, Ms D Green, Professor T Hervey, Dr E Hock, Mrs A Horn, Mr R Hudson, Professor R F W Jackson, Mrs V Jackson, Mr D Jary, Dr S-Y Kim, Professor M Kinsey, Dr W Kitchen, Professor J Labbe, Mr N Latimer, Professor P Latreille, Mrs J Marriott, Professor J Marsh, Professor P Martin, Dr J McMillan, Ms C McKeown, Mrs T Moore, Professor W Morgan, Ms A Mullaney, Mrs M Nolan, Dr S D North, Professor D Oglethorpe, Dr S Paisley, Professor N Phillips, Ms A Popa, Dr C Priede, Mr M Rapier, Dr E Simpson, Mr R Simpson, Professor F Stevenson, Mr R Sykes, Mrs N Talbot, Professor M Tait, Mr D Trendall, Professor G Valentine, Professor M Vincent, Dr R Vismans, Professor R von Fay-Siebenburgen, Professor G Waller, Professor C Watkins, Professor S West, Dr S Williams, Professor M Williamson, Dr L Wilson, Professor P Wright.

Secretary: Dr A West

In attendance: Mrs R Arnold, Mrs R Barker, Ms A Basi, Mrs K Clements, Mr A Dodman, Professor E Rodriguez-Falcon, Dr C E Sexton, Ms S M Stephens, Dr T Strike, Mr D Swinn, Mr L Wild, Ms L Woodcock, Ms Tracy Wray.

Apologies: The Senate received apologies from 23 members.

WELCOME

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed members to the first meeting of the Senate in 2016-17, including new Heads of Departments, elected members and the Students Union Sabbatical officers.

DEATHS

The Senate noted with regret the following deaths, which had occurred since the last meeting:

Sheena Barbara Banks, Development Co-ordinator in Educational Studies in the School of Education, and a member of staff from 1994 to 1998. Aged 74.

Professor Peter Blundell Jones, Professor in the School of Architecture, and a member of staff from 1994. Aged 67.

Robert Broad, Facilities Assistant in the Department of Estates and Facilities Management,

and a member of staff from March 2016. Aged 53.

Dr Caroline Butcher (nee Gray), Experimental Officer in the Department of Infection, Immunity and Cardiovascular Disease, and a member of staff from 2001 to 2015. Aged 37.

Emeritus Professor Michael Cable, Professor of Materials Science and Engineering, and a member of staff from 1961. Aged 81

Mark Cooke, postgraduate student in the Department of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology. Aged 35.

Phillip Dauti, postgraduate student in the Department of Geography. Aged 35.

Lynne Ford, Category Manager in Procurement, and a member of staff from 2010 to present. Aged 54.

Elaine Gahegan, Cleaning Team Leader in Cleaning Services within the Department of Estates and Facilities Management, and a member of staff from 1992 to 2015. Aged 67.

Ann Watson, Telex Operator and then a Technician in the University Library from 1979 to 2004. Aged 77.

John Weston, Joiner in the Department of Estates and Facilities Management, and a member of staff from 2009 to 2015. Aged 73.

Malcolm Whyte, Head of Information Support in the Department of Corporate Information & Computing Services, and a member of staff from 1978-2008. Aged 68.

Members stood in memory.

1. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S PRESENTATION AND REPORT

The Senate received a presentation from the Vice-Chancellor, in which attention was drawn to the following points:

- (a) The post-Brexit landscape for HE: As an international institution with a global outlook it was particularly concerning to note the perception from potential students and staff that the UK was not welcoming to talent, particularly given possible further restrictions on visas and reductions in overseas student numbers. However, it was noted that the weak pound was making the UK more affordable for international students who were critical to the quality of UK HE, as were international staff. Working closely with the Students' Union, the University was leading efforts to recognise the significant contributions of overseas staff and students (see also Minute 1(l)-(n), below).
- (b) International position: Investment by other countries in HE and efforts to attract global talent put the UK's standing and its attractiveness to students and researchers at risk. The sustainability of UK HE was dependent on the quality and reputation of its institutions, which in turn depended on cross-subsidy by international students to support investment in research and facilities. It was particularly pleasing to note the level of support from within the University but also the strength of support shown by local politicians, industry and business, all of whom were advocating the important contribution that international students make to the vibrancy and economy of the city and wider region. It was also noted that the Vice-Chancellor would be briefing the House of Lords on the importance of international staff and student recruitment.

- (c) HE and Research Bill: The Bill, currently before Parliament, had important implications for both teaching and tuition fees, linked to the TEF (see Minute 1(e)-(h), below), and for research, with the proposed establishment of UK (Research and Innovation) that would change the way research was funded and the related review by Lord Stern (see Minute 1(i)-(k), below). The creation of an Office for Students (OFS) with the power to override university Royal Charters, remove institutional degree awarding powers and direct the subjects that universities may teach and who was admitted onto them, had clear and worrying implications for the future autonomy of the sector.
- (d) Prudent planning and resources: In the context of these and wider uncertainties, the Strategy Delivery Group had initiated a number of projects intended to support the prudent assessment of institutional resources and income generating opportunities (see Minute 5, below).
- (e) Areas of opportunity: In spite of the challenges, there were opportunities for the University, particularly in key areas of research and impact and teaching where it had achieved prior recognition as a progressive and leading organisation. These included the development of the Advanced Manufacturing District and provision of degree apprenticeships; participation in the recent regional Science and Innovation Audit to inform the development of a regional strategy that would have a significant positive impact on the local communities; and working with the Government on industrial strategy in the areas of nuclear manufacturing and cyber-security. Global partnerships, in particular in China and the US, included a new partnership with the Chinese space programme and a global humanities and political economics partnership with Nanjing University. In addition, new alliances were being pursued in India and South Korea.
- (f) Facing challenges: In conclusion, the Vice-Chancellor drew attention to the University's fundamental and ongoing commitment to scholarship and excellent teaching, as enshrined in its Charter; to its role internationally, regionally and locally; and to the importance of maintaining its values at a time of challenge and change in order to make a positive difference to the world. It was noted that the local and regional contribution of the University was not necessarily fully recognised in local communities and enhanced engagements were necessary to ensure that the positive impacts were understood and valued. Increased institutional interaction with the media and greater media appetite for positive University-related stories were welcomed and it was reported that the consideration was being given to how to communicate more widely the various benefits of academic work on the local community and environment.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Learning and Teaching gave a presentation on the development of the Teaching Excellence Framework, drawing attention to the following points:

- (g) Progress update: It was reported that the TEF had been revised since the original consultation but remained a formulaic process driven by political priorities, including providing the means by which to increase home UG tuition fees, although the relevant statutory instruments were not yet in force. In considering the University's response to the TEF and engagement with the process it was important to remain cognisant of the institutional Learning and Teaching Strategy, which focused on what the University understood by the concept of 'excellence' in learning and teaching.

- (h) Implementation: Members noted that TEF would be implemented on a phased basis, all universities having been automatically entered into Year 1 (in 2015/16) and measured on the basis of their most recent assessment by the QAA. Year 2 was voluntary (as were subsequent years) and universities had until 31 January 2017 to decide whether or not to enter. The assessment would be based on evidence taken from existing data gathering and benchmarking exercises to assess aspects of quality against pre-determined criteria. Submission to the TEF would also include additional evidence which institutions would have to supply using a 15-page template. As TEF progressed into Years 3 and 4 it would become increasingly complex and look to differentiate at disciplinary level and eventually also apply to PGT provision.
- (i) Assessment and Outcome: Institutional submissions would be individually assessed and submitted to expert panels to offer a formal judgment. The revised timeline was noted, including provision to appeal the decisions of assessment panels. Institutions would receive a gold, silver or bronze award based on their relative performance against the sector. It was noted that only the top 20% of institutions could receive a gold award.
- (j) Next Steps: During discussion it was recognised that while there remained a number of outstanding issues and the sector continued to raise objections about various elements of the TEF and its application, it was important that the University engaged with the process and considered the potential impact it might have on audiences including government and students, both home and international. The University was carefully considering its approach, working closely with the Students' Union and involving Council, which had discussed the issue on 17 October, before a final decision was taken over entry into TEF Year 2. Members recognised a number of inherent risks associated with the TEF, in particular that a 'TEF league table' might affect recruitment and that tuition fees set below the maximum might be perceived to imply lower quality provision. These matters would be subject to a detailed cost/benefit analysis that also considered the bureaucratic burden and associated costs of the TEF.

The Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation gave a presentation on the development of the Research Excellence Framework and the University's preparatory work, drawing attention to the following points:

- (k) Stock-Take: During 2016 the University had undertaken a review of research activity, working closely with Faculty Directors of Research and Innovation. The review had considered a sample of outputs from eligible staff, and impact case studies from departments and provided feedback to help departments and faculties understand their preparedness. It was reported that the review had provided evidence of the excellence of research in a breadth of institutional activity but that it had also pointed to the need to strengthen outputs and impact.
- (l) Stern Review: Lord Stern's review of the REF had reported in July and recommended a number of changes to the process for the next exercise, in 2020. In particular, all research active staff should be submitted and there would be upper and lower limits on the number of individual outputs permitted. It was positive to note that the review advocated new institutional-level case studies and the inclusion of broader bodies of underpinning research. With respect to research environment, a new institutional-level template would mean shorter narratives for units of

assessment and increased use of metrics to address perceptions of duplication in 2014. Senate also noted the likelihood that submission to multiple UOAs would be abolished in 2020.

- (m) Next Steps: A technical consultation on the Stern recommendations would take place shortly to inform guidance that would be published during 2017 along with details of the rules and criteria. Submission would take place in 2020 and results announced in 2021. At institutional level, a further evaluation of progress would be undertaken in 2017 that took into account the impact of the Stern Review and focused on supporting enhanced performance in specific areas.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor provided an update on developments since the EU Referendum on 23 June, drawing attention to the following points:

- (n) Certainty: Despite the lack of clarity in many areas, the Government had confirmed the position on some key issues for the HE sector. Members welcomed the ability for new and continuing non-UK EU students to access student finance for the duration of their course and that they would be eligible to retain home fee status. It was also positive that HM Treasury had agreed to underwrite existing Horizon 2020 projects, including those that extended beyond the UK's departure from the EU, and funding for ERASMUS+ had been confirmed until 2020. Similarly, during the transition period, normal rules of residency would continue to apply to non-UK EU citizens.
- (o) Outstanding Issues: The timeline for the UK leaving the EU was not yet known. Although the Prime Minister had stated that the formal process, under Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty, would be triggered by March 2017 this was not certain. Whenever this occurred, the two-year negotiation and transition period would be marked by a high degree of complexity and challenge that would be felt across all sectors, including HE. The sensitive nature of those negotiations and consequent lack of detail about many of the issues at hand was likely to create significant uncertainty throughout the negotiation process.
- (p) The University Response: The University had aimed to be as proactive as possible in its response to the EU Referendum result and subsequent developments but colleagues were encouraged to suggest other possible actions that could usefully be taken. There had been regular updates to students and staff via a dedicated website that had been running, and was regularly updated, since 24 June, and direct communications such as an immigration information session for concerned staff. In addition, research activity continued to be actively encouraged, both EU funding applications and the development of research partnerships. Externally, the University-led #weareinternational campaign had been relaunched on a global scale and was contributing to the wider policy debate in Government, including through the White Rose office in Brussels.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 JUNE

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2016, having been circulated, were approved as an accurate record.

3. MATTERS ARISING ON THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

4. MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL

Senate received and noted a summary of the matters within the Reports from Committees of the Senate and Other Matters sections of the Agenda for which Senate's formal approval was sought.

5. STRATEGY DELIVERY GROUP

Senate received a presentation from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor about the work of the Strategy Delivery Group, which she was Chairing under the sponsorship of the Vice-Chancellor, and the context in which it was operating. Attention was drawn to the following:

- (a) Context and Purpose: At a time of increasing challenge for HE it was timely to consider how the University could maintain and enhance its institutional strength on a sustainable basis. The real terms reduction in funding that resulted from capped home/EU tuition fees and flat cash funding for research, together with uncertainty over future EU funding and immigration policy, including over international students, were all noted as restricting the institutional ability to generate income. Furthermore, there was growing competition in student recruitment at national and international levels, including growth in the number of new and alternative providers, and unknown consequences of Brexit (see Minute 1 (l)-(n), above). The cumulative impact of these factors on the University's financial forecasts was growth in expenditure outstripping growth in income. It was essential for the University to address this gap whilst enabling delivery of strategic objectives. Throughout the process SDG was seeking an open dialogue with staff, including Senate (see also Minute 9, below), and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor would be holding a series of open door sessions for individual colleagues.
- (b) Workstreams: It was reported that SDG would operate as a programme group that was intended to facilitate more specific action, e.g. at local level, with input from a range of colleagues across the University. An overarching framework comprised three workstreams within which these activities could take place: (1) University-wide review of distinct activities in a number of areas designed to maximise their impact; (2) cost management review, focusing on how to control and where possible reduce costs whilst enabling growth in income; and (3) review of professional functions, activities and services. The latter would encompass areas of professional activity in both faculties and professional services and seek to identify how these supported strategic delivery and how this could be enhanced.
- (c) Costs Management Review: The Chief HR & Corporate Officer provided an overview of the Staff Release Scheme, which had been established under workstream 2 (see Minute 5(b), above) and would be launched on 20 October. SRS was a centrally determined scheme which would enable members of staff to voluntarily leave their employment in return for a payment, subject to local considerations and an agreed business case. The scheme would also provide opportunities for future operational effectiveness and change to maintain and enhance the student experience and wider academic endeavour. Members noted the approach and timescales involved and the support that would be made available both to colleagues involved in administering the scheme and for

staff who were considering applying to it. Clarification was provided about the programme of communications that would support SRS; Senate noted that although Students' Union staff had been involved previously it was important that the SU Officers and wider student body were engaged in the process.

- (d) Review of Research Support Activity: It was reported that the first review under workstream 3 (see Minute 5(b), above) would consider research support activity. As a research intensive institution it was vital that supporting structures were effective and appropriately located. Members noted the membership of the review group and its agreed objectives. Over a period of approximately three months the group would discuss with colleagues across the University before reporting its findings to SDG. It was noted that the review would focus on both Research and Innovation Services and support available within the Faculty of Engineering, as a case study – but that each faculty was represented on the review group to ensure that the matter was viewed holistically.

REPORTS FROM STATUTORY BODIES

6. REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL

(Meeting held on 7 July 2016)

Senate received and noted the Report on the Proceedings of the Council.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

7. REPORT OF THE LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

(Meetings held on 5 July and 28 September 2016)

Senate received and approved the Report, including:

- (a) Terms of Reference and Membership: Senate approved amended Terms of Reference and Membership for the Learning and Teaching Committee and the Committee for Collaborative Provision.
- (b) New, significantly amended and discontinued programmes: Senate approved new, significantly amended, suspended and discontinued programmes approved by Faculties since 4 May 2016.

8. REPORT OF THE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

(Meeting held on 14 September 2016)

Senate received and approved the Report, including an update on work to develop a revised ethics policy which would be submitted to Senate for approval in December.

9. REPORT OF THE SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE

(Meetings held on 7 July and 29 September 2016)

Senate received and approved the Report, including amendments to the committee's categories of membership to reflect current practice. Attention was also drawn to the Committee's planned discussions with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor about how it could contribute to the Strategy Delivery Group and support related communications with Senate. The Committee had held two

productive and informative meetings with each of the Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor during June. Those discussions had included reflections on the capital planning process, particularly the need for adequate consideration and understanding of the long-term revenue implications of initiatives in the capital programme, and the need for strategic and financial planning to focus on both income generation and costs reduction. The Chair had held his annual meeting with UEB during June, at which the AMRC had been highlighted as an area where increasing the awareness and understanding across the University could help to identify new opportunities.

Post-meeting note: It is planned that a future meeting of Senate will take place at AMRC and include related presentations and the opportunity for members to undertake a tour of the facilities.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

10. REPORT OF THE ESTATES COMMITTEE

(Meeting held on 27 May 2016)

Senate received and noted the Report of the Estates Committee. Clarification was provided that all projects must comply with relevant equality and diversity legislation, including that regarding disability. Individual projects are assigned a Project Executive Group chaired by a Pro-Vice-Chancellor which should reflect on these issues before signing-off on designs. It was noted that these processes may benefit from some refinement to ensure that such matters were routinely discussed and that supporting information and policies were readily available.

11. REPORTS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

(Meetings held on 9 May & 13 June 2016)

Senate received and noted the Reports of the Finance Committee.

12. REPORT OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

(Meeting held on 11 May 2016)

Senate received and noted the Report of the Health and Safety Committee.

OTHER MATTERS

13. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MILITARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Senate received and approved the Report.

14. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STUDENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT, 2015-16

Senate received and noted the Annual Report of the Student Services Department.

15. REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN

A Report on action taken since the last meeting of the Senate was received and noted.

16. MAJOR RESEARCH GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

A Report listing major research grants and contracts awarded since the last meeting of the Senate was received and noted.

These Minutes were confirmed at a meeting

held on 14 December 2016

..... Chairman