

## UNIVERSITY BOARD

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2009

- Present: Mr AJ Frost (Chair).  
Mr C Appleton; Ms M Barron, Prof P Curran; Mr G Darnton; Mrs J Dawson; Mr C Elder; Mrs K Everett; Prof C Hallett; Rev Dr D Hart; Mr D Hines; Mr T Lee; Dr P Rawlinson; Mr J Ricci; Mr M Riordan; Mr R Spragg; Mr G Sturdy; Prof J Vinney; Mr D Willey
- In Attendance: Mrs J Graham; Prof T Lange (Item 4.2); Mr N Richardson (Clerk to the Board); Mr G Rayment (Committee Clerk)
- Apologies: Dr P Barnwell; Mr J Francis; Mrs F McMillan; Prof N Petford; Mr G Smith; Mrs S Sutherland;.

*The Chair welcomed new members Mr G Darnton and Professor Christine Hallett to the meeting and Mrs J Graham, Director of Financial & Commercial Services who attended as an observer.*

## ACTION

## 1. MINUTES

1.1 Board Strategic Planning Seminar (18<sup>th</sup> September 2009)

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record.

1.2 Board Meeting (10<sup>th</sup> July 2009)

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record.

## 1.3 Matters Arising

- 1.2.1 Board Lunch Seminars (Minute 2.1.6). The Chair invited members to give feedback on the Board Lunch Seminar held on 19<sup>th</sup> October. Feedback was broadly positive and it was agreed that these should be continued on an occasional basis, but perhaps with a less formal structure and greater interaction. A date will be set for another Lunch Seminar and members were invited to notify the Chair of any suggestions for themes or discussion topics. **Clerk/Members**

- 1.2.2 Visits to Schools (Minute 1.2.8). All Deans had been reminded of the opportunity to engage with Board Members and the Chair encouraged all Members to undertake School Visits as appropriate. Board Members on the Research & Enterprise Committee reported that they had undertaken visits to Schools to learn first-hand about issues affecting research & enterprise activities. These visits had proved very helpful and had been welcomed by the Schools concerned. The Programme of BU Professorial Inaugural Lectures for 2009/10 was tabled and Members were encouraged to attend if possible.

- 1.2.3 Other Matters Arising were dealt with under other agenda items (below).

## **2 BOARD MATTERS**

### **2.1 Membership**

2.1.1 The Chair informed the Board that Mr Glyn Smith was temporarily unable to undertake Board activities and attend meeting due to outside commitments. Mrs Sue Sutherland had agreed to Chair the forthcoming Strategy & Resources Committee meeting in Mr Smith's place. Rev. Dr David Hart had also stepped down as Chair of the Research Ethics Committee with effect from 25th November 2009 and work was in-hand to find a replacement from outside of the University. In addition, the one-year appointment of Mr Julian Francis to the Strategy & Resources Committee would end in January and the Chair sought a volunteer from among the external members to replace him. Any Members interested in taking on this role should inform the Chair.

**Members**

2.1.2 Following on from the pre-Dinner presentation from Mr Ricci (SUBU President) any Members interested in joining a working group to consider issues related to carbon reduction were asked to inform the Deputy Chair (Mr Sturdy). Also, the Audit & Risk Committee had been made aware of the CUC's recommendation that an Independent Board Member be appointed as Health & Safety Champion. Any members interested in this role should approach Mr Lee.

**Members**

2.1.3 The Chair had asked the Clerk to the Board to begin the process of electing a new Chair in advance of his term of office expiring. He would write to all Members shortly with details of the process. Only Independent Members could be nominated, but all Members could vote. It was hoped to complete the process by the end of the year. The Clerk to the Board would also be reviewing the Membership in terms of changing Governance processes and as part of this review all Members would be provided with updated Letters of Appointment setting out details of their role and responsibilities.

**Clerk**

2.1.4 The Chair reported on matters arising from the CUC's Chairs' Conference which he had attended. Forthcoming changes to the Charities Act were expected to impact on the University's Governance arrangements. A paper prepared by the Executive setting out the changes would be submitted for consideration by the Strategy & Resources Committee before circulation to the Board. The Conference had also received the report of a National Union of Students (NUS) survey of Governance arrangements. This prompted the need for the Board to review its own formal relationship with the Students' Union and further work would be undertaken on this. It was noted that all Student Unions would be undertaking governance restructuring over the coming 9 months.

2.1.5 The Chair had been approached at the Conference regarding the work being undertaken on the SUPP project. The Clerk to the Board (Project Lead) explained that this project brought together 6 FE institutions in Somerset together with Plymouth and Bournemouth Universities with a view to filling the gap in Higher Education Provision which currently existed in the Somerset area. A fuller briefing note would be circulated to the Board for information.

**Clerk**

2.1.6 Finally, the Conference had received a useful presentation from Research Councils UK regarding research funding arrangements. It was also agreed that a representative from HEFCE would be invited to present to a future Board CPD session.

**Clerk**

### **2.2 Future presentations and CPD sessions**

2.2.1 The Chair invited suggestions for future CPD sessions. It was agreed that these might include HEFCE funding and the formal relationship between the Board and the Students' Union (as above) as well as a presentation from the Dean of the

Business School and a presentation on changes to Pension arrangements to inform future discussions. There was also a request that future CPD topics include more subjects related to the Student Experience.

**Clerk**

### **2.3 Arts University College Bournemouth (AUCB)**

The Chair reported on his presentation (with the Vice-Chancellor) to the Board of the neighboring AUCB. The Principal and Chairman of the AUCB Board would provide a reciprocal presentation to the Board and one of the discussion themes would be to consider the potential for shared service provision.

## **3 STRATEGIC REPORTS**

### **3.1 Strategic Plan 2009/10 – 2013/14**

3.1.1 The Vice-Chancellor introduced this paper which built on the previous discussions arising from the two Board Strategic Planning Seminars and provided an updated Strategic Plan through to 2013/14 plus a revised Five Year Financial Plan. Although there had been major changes to the economic environment since 2006 the revised plan offered no major shifts in strategic direction but continued to be based upon competition on the basis of quality. The revised Financial Plan did however provide a greater emphasis on financial prudence. A separate ICT and Estates Strategy was in production and would be presented to the Board in the coming year. The process of reviewing the Strategy had comprised of three key elements: consideration of which activities should be strengthened, stopped or reviewed; a review of the KPIs; and the revised Financial Plan.

3.1.2 The DVC tabled a paper setting out the revised KPIs. These included 5 new KPIs:  
Number of applications per HEFCE-funded undergraduate place;  
Academic staff with defined academic output (%)  
Net assets excluding pension adjustment (£M)  
Cash generation (£M)  
CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (Scope 1 and 2) (tonnes)

3.1.3 Two of the existing KPIs, relating to overall student satisfaction (NSS) and Times League Table position had been amended slightly to provide more useful metrics. It was also noted that the three KPIs relating to research and enterprise income and FEC recovery on enterprise income may be subject to further modification as a result of work currently being undertaken on forecasting for these activities. Once finalised the KPIs paper would be presented to the Strategy & Resources Committee for sign-off.

3.1.4 Members noted Section 8 of the paper which set out a number of activities to be reviewed over the coming year. It was agreed that a Board Seminar should be arranged to consider this more detail and plan for these activities.

**Clerk**

3.1.5 Members also suggested that the plan might be reviewed to better reflect the University's goals in terms of widening the student experience and also the possibility of including Engagement with Professionals as an activity to be strengthened by 2014. It was also noted that some administrative systems were becoming more bureaucratic due to external factors (for example, immigration requirements) and this could affect the goal of reducing management and administrative costs.

3.1.6 The Board considered the proposal to consolidate the income targets for Research & Enterprise and the DoF set out the rationale for this as agreed by the Research & Enterprise Committee. Although the targets would be aggregated, a detailed breakdown would be available for analysis and to ensure thorough monitoring.

- 3.1.7 Members considered the need to measure aspects of the student and staff experience such as well-being and quality of life, which were not covered by the proposed KPIs. It was noted that every School and Professional Service were continuing to reflect on the intellectual culture of the University and that a staff survey would be carried out in the new year.
- 3.1.8 The Revised Strategic Plan was endorsed by the Board, subject to the sign-off of the final revised KPIs by the Strategy & Resources Committee.

## **3.2 Five Year Financial Plan**

- 3.2.1 The DoF presented the revised Financial Plan which was a work in progress and would continue to be revised over the coming weeks. Figures would be finalised at 1st December 2009 and included in the return to HEFCE. The final plan would be presented to the Strategy & Resources Committee for approval at its December meeting. It was noted that forecasts for Research and Enterprise income were currently in preparation and had taken a 'bottom up' approach with Schools providing the initial projections. The revised Five-Year Financial Plan was endorsed by the Board subject to final approval by the Strategy & Resources Committee.

## **3.3 Financial Statements for 2008/9**

- 3.3.1 Financial Statements for Bournemouth University & Subsidiary Companies  
The DoF introduced the Financial Statements. There was one outstanding issue relating to a HEFCE report on Student Data. The report was still outstanding and could lead to a possible liability of up to £1 million. The statements had been discussed in detail by the Audit & Risk Committee and recommended for approval by the Board. The Chair queried the assumptions regarding pension provision and it was agreed that further discussion on this would be required in future.
- 3.3.2 External Auditors' Report  
The final external auditors report had now been agreed with the Audit & Risk Committee who were satisfied that appropriate action was being taken on any outstanding issues. They had also agreed the BDO Management Letter which would be included with the return to HEFCE. The Chair asked whether the University had ever been subject to a PAYE audit and the DoF explained that BDO had reviewed the PAYE arrangements and would report on any weaknesses identified.
- 3.3.3 Internal Auditors' Report  
The report was noted.
- 3.3.4 Annual Report of the Audit & Risk Committee  
The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee explained that the Committee had agreed an amendment to this draft report to include the benchmarking of identified risks against those of other HEIs. The report was noted.
- 3.3.5 Subject to the points noted above, the Financial Statements were approved by the Board for submission to HEFCE.

## **3.4 'Single Conversation' – Annual Accountability Returns 2009**

- 3.4.1 The DoF presented this return which brought together eight key returns to HEFCE into one return. This facilitated better cross-checking and consistency between the data provided in the different returns. The Board noted the return and suggested two minor amendments: a semi-colon was required in the response to Q9 of the Assessment Monitoring Statement, and the response to Q2 should read 'plan' rather than 'place'. Subject to these points the return was

approved for submission to HEFCE.

### **3.5 Annual Performance Review (KPIs)**

- 3.5.1 The DVC introduced this report which had now been largely superseded by the revised KPIs (discussed above). The Board noted this report.

### **3.6 Professional Services Review (PSR): Update**

- 3.6.1 The PVC(E&PP) provided a verbal report on progress with the Professional Services Review. The PSR had arisen from Administrative Processes Review which had in turn formed part of the previous Strategic Plan. The PSR had instigated a restructuring from 24 professional services to 5 from January 2009. Directors were now in place for the 5 new Directorates and they were reviewing their own local structures and resource requirements as part of phase 2 of the PSR. Specifically the review of HR would bring together personnel, HR and staff development functions; Financial & Commercial Services were implementing the consultation on the new support arrangements for Research & Enterprise; Marketing & Communications were developing a Marketing Strategy and would undertake a small-scale restructuring; Estates & ICT would produce new ICT and Estates Strategies which would be presented to the Board in the new year; Student & Academic Services would shortly complete a consultation on a wide-reaching restructuring exercise. In addition, cross-University reviews were taking place to look at, for example, management information systems.
- 3.6.2 It was noted that there was no provision for a separate 'selling' function to work alongside Marketing. The DoF explained that this had been considered in the context of the new support arrangements for research and enterprise activity but had proved difficult to reach agreement on how such arrangements would work in practice. A Working Group had now been formed which would consider issues of University-wide business development support.

## **4 UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE GROUP REPORTS**

### **4.1 Vice-Chancellor's Report**

- 4.1.1 The Vice-Chancellor tabled a report from Universities UK on 'The Impact of Universities on the UK Economy' for the information of Board Members.
- 4.1.2 The Vice-Chancellor also drew the Board's attention to the 'Higher Ambitions' framework document which had arisen from a Government review and was intended to provide a backdrop against which the policy on fees could be reviewed. This include a number of points which would benefit the University, including: a 50% participation target; an emphasis on employability; a move from widening participation to fair access; support for greater information for students; support for STEM subjects and enterprise support funding; employer involvement in course design; and international promotion. Some recommendations were less beneficial however, including more concentrated research funding; an increase in contested funding; and no commitment to a unit of resource for students. Other recommendations which would require further consideration included encouragement for more flexible course provision; HEFCE funding to promote mergers; and more funding for the sports and cultural agenda.
- 4.1.3 The University had now finalised a contribution establishing the John Kent Institute in Tourism which would include funding for 11 PhD student places.
- 4.1.4 Finally the Vice-Chancellor recommended David Watson's book on morale in Higher Education which highlighted the contradictions in people's expectations of contemporary HE.

## **4.2 Executive Business School - Update**

- 4.2.1 The DVC introduced this item by setting out the background to recent developments in the Business School, particularly the development of the Executive Business Centre (EBC) which had been launched in September and was now fully occupied. The Dean of the Business School joined the meeting to provide further information. He explained that student recruitment had increased by approximately 40% on the previous year and the EBC facilities were already being used by a number of outside organisations. Developments would continue to be carefully monitored and it was possible that the underlying assumptions which had informed the EBC business case would continue to change. In order to become a Business School of international standing and receive the necessary accreditation it was agreed that the profile of current academic staff would need to be reviewed with, for example, the aim of moving towards at least 70% of staff being qualified to PhD level. A consultation document setting out the plans to achieve this would be circulated shortly. The Board discussed the incentives needed to recruit and retain staff of this quality and also the possible ways in which a strong reputation for business ethics might be included in the plans. A more detailed discussion would take place in the context of a future CPD session. **Prof Lange**

## **4.3 National Pay Negotiations 2009**

*Confidential*

## **5 COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **5.1 Strategy & Resources Committee (28<sup>th</sup> September 2009)**

The minutes were noted. It was also noted that the attendance at the meeting appeared to include more Executive members than independent members. It was agreed to review the Committee's Terms of Reference in respect of this point.

#### **5.1.1 Management Accounts**

Members noted the Management Accounts

### **5.2 Audit & Risk Committee (2<sup>nd</sup> October 2009)**

The minutes were noted.

#### **5.2.1 Risk Register**

The Risk Register was noted. Members asked about the arrangements for managing the risk of a Swine Flu outbreak and it was confirmed that this formed part of the Major Incident Plan.

#### **5.2.2 Risk Management Policy**

The policy was noted.

### **5.3 Human Resources Committee (8 October 2009)**

The Report was noted. The Chair of the Human Resources Committee updated the Board with progress in seeking a new DoHR to succeed Mr Riordan upon his retirement. A long list of 12 candidates had been agreed from a field of over 50 applications and interviews would take place on December 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **5.4 Senate (16<sup>th</sup> October 2009)**

The Minutes were noted.

**5.5 Research & Enterprise Committee (29<sup>th</sup> October 2009)**

The minutes were noted.

**5.6 Research Ethics Committee: BU Research Ethics Code of Practice**

The Code of Practice was noted.

**6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

6.1 There was no other business.

**7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Board will take place at 9.30am on **Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2009**, in the Boardroom, Poole House, Talbot Campus. This will be preceded by the Board's evening dinner on **Thursday 28th November**, from 6.00pm.

A date will be sought for an additional meeting to discuss the implementation of the Revised Strategic Plan.

Noel DG Richardson  
Clerk to the Board  
November 2009

Board minutes November 09 GRv3

Approved as a true and accurate.

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Mr Alan J Frost (Chair)

Date:.....29<sup>th</sup> January 2010.....