

SENATE (with Board representation)

RESEARCH & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 18 June 2012

Present: Prof M Bennett (**Chair**);
Mr D Ball; Prof R Gozlan; Prof M Hadfield; Ms Z Lovaszy; Prof J Parker; Prof D Patton; Prof B Richards; Prof H Schutkowski; Ms J Taylor; Prof E van Teijlingen; Dr K Welham; Prof T Zhang.

In Attendance: G Rayment (Committee Clerk); Mr M Weaver (Item 1 only).

Apologies: Prof A Fyall; Dr P Barnwell; Mr P Breakwell; Prof A Gregoriou; Prof P Hardwick; Mr T Lee; Prof S McDougall; Ms J Northam (Secretary); Mr D Reeve; Prof J Roach; Dr J J Zhang.

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (29 February 2012)

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record.

1.1 Matters Arising not covered in the Agenda

1.1.1 The Chair informed members that he had received the Programme Status Report from Mr Weaver. All current activities were shown as 'green' although authorisation was still outstanding on one phase 2 project which the Chair agreed to chase. Work was progressing on the new CPD system and the PGR system.

1.1.2 It was noted that the BU Festival of Learning (previous minute 5.6.2) would now take place in June 2013 rather than Easter 2013.

1.1.3 All other matters arising had been taken forward through the monthly University Research & Enterprise Forum meetings and/or were covered under the substantive agenda items below.

2. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL BARRIERS TO COLLABORATION

2.1 The Chair invited members to raise any matters in respect to barriers to collaboration. No new issues were raised.

3. BRIEF UPDATES

The Chair updated members on developments in the following areas:

3.1 Research Excellence Framework (REF) Update

3.1.1 The final stages of the June exercise were on course for completion. Sally Gates (PR and Communications Co-ordinator) would shortly be taking maternity leave and the Chair had agreed to replace her with a 'like for like' temporary appointment from September.

3.2 **HEIF-5 Update**

3.2.1 HEFCE had given the University permission to re-profile its HEIF payments over time, which would relieve the pressure to spend funding in the shorter term. Individual HEIF themes were progressing well. The science hub had completed its first hurdle and would proceed to the full application phase over the Summer. The DM Centre for Entrepreneurship was now established with 4 businesses currently receiving incubation facilities. Work was continuing on developing a leadership programme. The 'Soho on sea' theme was also progressing well following a trade mission to Los Angeles. An informal networking event with those involved was scheduled to take place in the 'Loft' bar from 5.00pm on Thursday 21st June and members were invited to attend. The dementia theme was also progressing and a small investment had also been made with the School of Design, Engineering and Computing (DEC) relating to a project on prosopagnosia (face blindness). There had been no success as yet in recruiting a Business Engagement Leader, but the Chair and the Executive Director of Organisational Development were in the process of holding initial, informal meetings with 4 candidates. The Chair emphasised that he was still seeking expressions of interest and ideas for HEIF themes and enterprise vehicles which the University could pursue.

3.3 **BU 2018 Strategy and School research strategies**

3.3.1 The Chair informed members that the draft University budget for 2012/13 had been presented to the Finance & Resources Committee (FRC) for consideration prior to submission to the University Board for final approval on 6th July. The FRC had expressed concern at the failure to meet this year's Research & Enterprise income targets and continued to press for further progress on achieving any future targets, although they did now recognise that income generation was not necessarily an effective measure of performance for these areas. As a result the Chair had contacted all Schools and asked them to review and scrutinise their income targets for 2012/13 to ensure that they were realistic and achievable. Some Schools had subsequently clarified issues and amended their targets. Those that had not responded were assumed to be content with the targets already submitted. There was now, therefore, a clear commitment to achieving these targets and failure to do so would have serious consequences. The Chair stressed that achieving R&E income targets must be seen as a priority. If necessary Schools should consult with their management accountants on how any changes to income targets would impact on the School's bottom line and any adjustments needed in other areas to compensate for any changes to these targets.

3.3.2 The Chair also emphasised the importance of ensuring that School's Strategic Delivery Plans are clear in respect of Research and Knowledge Exchange initiatives. He would be seeking information from all School representatives at future meetings of the Forum on the action being taken to increase bids.

3.4 **Update on BRIAN**

3.4.1 The BRIAN system was due to go-live on 22 June. Initial discussions with Marketing and Communications on a campaign to publicise the system had not proved fruitful and the Chair expressed some concern that there was insufficient awareness of the system among staff. Members noted, however, that the training sessions had been well attended and anecdotal evidence suggested that staff were aware of the system. The Chair encouraged all members to help to continue to raise awareness and emphasised the importance of academic staff engaging with system and updating profiles before the start of the new academic year.

3.5 BU Festival of Learning

3.5.1 The Chair asked members to engage with their colleagues to encourage ideas for short courses or other activities for the BU Festival of Learning in June 2013 and help to raise the profile of the event.

3.6 BU Research Themes

3.6.1 The Chair updated members on progress with the key research themes. Some themes appeared more advanced than others and the Chair reminded members that the RDU should be made aware of activities which were taking place. He informed members that a new edition of the BU Chronicle was in production. He also explained that, due to problems with the implementation of the Digital BU project, he would be considering whether an interim solution would be necessary in order to create a better research & knowledge exchange web presence.

3.7 Graduate School Activities

3.7.1 Prof Zhang updated the Committee on Graduate School developments. The Strategic Delivery Plan had now been approved. Initiatives within the plan included the introduction of Postgraduate Research (PGR) and Postgraduate Taught (PGT) personal and professional frameworks (including research skills training). Digital support would also be introduced to collect portfolios and profile evidence of skills training, which would be available to students alongside their doctorate qualification.

3.7.2 The Graduate School's strategy also sought to increase PGR numbers and completion rates through a number of initiatives. A PGR student committee had been established and was undertaking community building activities and a PGR mentoring system had been introduced. A PGR conference was also scheduled to take place on 28 June and members were asked to raise awareness of this and encourage students to attend.

3.7.3 The Chair noted that it would be helpful to receive papers on the strategic developments and for the Committee to be able to offer its input into these developments. It was agreed that papers (which had already been prepared for the Research Degrees Committee) would be presented to the next meeting of the Forum for consideration.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 4.1 The Chair informed members that he would be reviewing the Committee's business and structure of the meeting agendas and welcomed any comments or suggestions from members out of committee.

Date of next meeting:

1.30pm on Wednesday 26th September 2012 in the Boardroom.

Geoffrey Rayment
Committee Clerk
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