



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2008

08/01 Attendance

1.1 Present

Mr J Pallett	Chair
Mr D Antell	
Dr H Barrett	
Mr J Bateman	
Professor M Clarke	
Mr A Duncan	
Ms F Fairhurst	
Professor D Green	Vice Chancellor
Mr A Hemming	
Mr M Newitt	
Mr T Patrickson	
Mr L Probert	
Mrs E Spalding	
Mrs J Swan	
Mr P Swinburn	
Professor T Thompson	

1.2 In Attendance

Dr M Doughty	Pro Vice Chancellor (Resources)
Professor J Elkin	Deputy Vice Chancellor
Professor G Elliott	Director of Regional Development
Mrs A Hannaford	Director of ILS
Ms H Johnstone	Assistant to the Registrar and Secretary
Mr J Ryan	Registrar and Secretary
Ms G Slater	Director of Personnel

1.3 Apologies

Ms J Bruce	
Professor J Low	
Ms J Quallington	
Mr P West	
Mrs P Finch	Director of Finance
Dr M Stowell	Director of Quality and Educational Development

1.4 Election of Chair

Mr Julian Pallett was re-elected as Chair of the Board of Governors. Proposed by Mr Andrew Duncan and seconded by Mr Tim Patrickson.

1.5 Membership

The Chair welcomed Mrs Julie Swan, Mr John Bateman, Mr David Antell and Mr Andrew Hemming to their first meeting of the Board.

1.6 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

08/02 Presentation on Primary Measures

2.1 The Registrar recirculated the paper which was presented to the July meeting of the Board on Primary Measures along with a revised set of Primary Measures which related to the Key Success Criteria in the Strategic Plan. A further set of measures relating to Overall Institutional Sustainability and Profile as recommended in the CUC report was also circulated.

2.2 The Board had previously agreed, as a result of the Review of the Board's Effectiveness, that it preferred to have a set of Primary Measures of Performance rather than Key Performance Indicators. The Primary Measures should relate to the Strategic Plan, Corporate Planning Statement and planning process. It had also recognised that the Primary Measures would be implemented in a variety of ways and it would be important to identify those Primary Measures which were not only appropriate for informing the Board of Governors but also in assisting the Executive Management Board in the day to day running of the University. It was noted that some of the measures would be reported on regularly to the Board whilst others would be reported less frequently.

2.3. Members were asked to consider whether they would like a traffic light system for identifying the level of risk associated with each measure. Previously the Board had expressed a preference for commentary and assessment. Members agreed that the traffic light system had a tendency to cause areas to be overlooked and expressed a preference for narrative or a combination of traffic lights and narrative. It was agreed that in the first instance measures should be presented with a commentary.

2.4 Members considered the proposed Primary Measures and noted that quantitative and qualitative measures were included for each of the key success criteria. It was stressed that the measures should be reviewed regularly to ensure that they still met the key success criteria. It was proposed that the Board should receive a report on one area at each meeting.

2.5. The Board confirmed the need to ensure that the Primary Measures were of benefit to staff on day to day basis and would not draw the Board into a level of management which was inappropriate.

2.6 Members noted that it would take time to refine the measures but agreed that those identified represented an excellent start. The Board adopted the Primary Measures as a working document.

08/03 Presentation on Strategic Capital Developments

- 3.1. The Vice Chancellor and Pro Vice Chancellor (Resources) delivered a presentation to the Board on the University's Strategic Capital Developments.
- 3.2. Members noted that the Barclays Loan Facility required a review of progress by March 2008 in the context of second stage funding. This coincided with the timescale for any further application to HEFCE for permission for further borrowing. University officers have regular meetings with Barclays and they are aware of the rising costs and extended timescales
- 3.3. It has been agreed that the Infirmary Building will be used for teaching space including lecture theatres, teaching rooms and staff offices. It will initially be occupied by the Business School. It is anticipated that the first residences on the City Campus will be ready for September 2009.
- 3.4. The projected costs of the City Campus development have risen from £80m to £129m. This is due to the timescale for the project being longer than had originally been anticipated; the change of plans for the use of the Infirmary Building; and inflation. As a result it is unlikely that the entire project will be completed by September 2011. However new acquisitions, such as the Hylton Road Garage and Regency School, will ease the pressure on the St John's campus and provide more flexibility. The extended timescale provides additional opportunities for fund raising.
- 3.5. Members expressed concern at the increase in costs. It was noted that the cost consultants have already identified substantial savings on Phase A and the same exercise will be carried out on Phase B. The Board was reminded that when it originally agreed to embark on the City Centre development it had recognised that it would be important to carry out the work in phases, in order to ensure the University did not commit to works it could not afford to complete. Although the costs are higher the revised plans for the site include far more facilities than was originally envisaged. Members noted that £40m was being spent on additional halls of residence which is a significant percentage of the overall budget. It may be that the Board wishes to consider looking at an arrangement with a housing association in the future in order to capitalise rents.
- 3.6. The student governors expressed concern that the growing number of students was already causing capacity issues in the Students' Union and there was a distinct possibility that within the next year or so it would be unable to cater for all students. A number of additional alternative venues on campus were identified and these will be investigated.
- 3.7. Members noted that there would be a tour of the summer refurbishments on the St John's campus prior to the next Board meeting on the 1st December. Members would also be offered an opportunity to visit the City Campus site.

08/04 Minutes [BG08/01]

- 4.1. The minutes of the meeting held on the 7th July 2008 were confirmed as a correct record.
- 4.2. There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

08/05 Chair's Business

- 5.1. The Chair reported that the Deputy Vice Chancellor would be retiring at the end of the academic year in August 2009. It is proposed that Professor Elkin will continue to be employed in a part-time capacity, in a fund-raising and ambassadorial role. The Deputy Vice

Chancellor post is a Board appointment and the Remunerations Committee will be meeting to discuss the job description, person specification and advertising. It is anticipated that an appointment will be made in March 2009 with a view to the person taking up post in September 2009.

08/06 Vice Chancellor's Business [BG 08/02]

The Vice Chancellor presented his report and updated members as follows:-

- 6.1. The academic year had started well with a healthy demand for places. The summer refurbishments had been completed on time and there had been a distinct improvement on last year in terms of timetabling and student accommodation. However due to the current economic climate it is apparent that more students are choosing to commute to study and this has resulted in the University slightly oversourcing off campus residential accommodation.

It was noted that at present on campus accommodation is only available for some first year and disabled students. With the completion of the halls of residence in 2009 the University will be able to guarantee on-campus places to all first year students which will release the off campus accommodation currently ring fenced or first year students to the second and third year student market.

- 6.2. It is anticipated that the out turn for the 2007/2008 budget will show a £1.5m surplus. The 2008/2009 budget should also produce a small surplus despite a 40% rise in the University's fuel costs and a 5% pay rise in October.
- 6.3. The Ofsted inspection of the University's Primary Initial Teacher Education provision has been published. The University has been awarded a Grade 1 (outstanding) for Management and Quality Assurance. Members expressed their congratulations to the Education team on an excellent result.
- 6.4. Members noted that in the National Student Survey scores had generally improved. However there had been a dip in the score for Practice Placements. This relates to Nursing and Midwifery placements and the Institute of Health, Social Care and Psychology are investigating the causes.
- 6.5. The Board received the report.

08/07 Student Recruitment [BG 08/03]

- 7.1. The Registrar advised the Board that recruitment to Nursing and Midwifery had, with the exception of Mental Health Nursing, achieved its targets. This was a significant achievement given the position in recent years and was a tribute to the work of colleagues in the Institute of Health, Social Care and Psychology, Admissions and Communications & Development. The University has over recruited to the Adult branch of Nursing to allow for attrition.
- 7.2. Recruitment to Initial Teacher Education has improved on previous years particularly PGCE Secondary. Recruitment to the UMS suite of courses has resulted in the highest ever first year entry. The current position for Foundation Degrees is also significantly ahead of last year. The Foundation Degree in Teaching and Learning in the South West is doing particularly well.
- 7.3. The electronic registration system has been improved and this has resulted in 2000 more students having registered as at the 22nd September than at the same time in the previous year. This is an excellent result and will assist staff in collecting data between now and the census date, 1st December.

- 7.4. Work is already underway modelling the University's likely position by 1st December and currently a HEFCE funded figure of 4000 is a reasonable estimate. HEFCE will shortly be carrying out an audit to ensure that the University is accurately forecasting wastage rates. This, and the reconciliation of the July HESA Return with the December 07 HESA, may mean that the University has to include a higher forecast of wastage than was previously the case.
- 7.5. International recruitment is showing only a slight improvement over last year.
- 7.6. In relation to recruitment for 2009/2010 a review will be carried out of the number of offers made and conversions. There will also be a review of the University's postgraduate course offer. A similar review will be undertaken in relation to the International market, which will look at what competitors are offering, level of English required and consideration of an intensive 12 week English course.

08/08 Financial Matters – Forecast Outturn 2007/2008 [BG 08/04]

- 8.1. The Board received the forecast outturn for 2007/2008 and noted that, subject to external audit, a surplus of £1.5m was forecast. Members noted that the University's income had increased from the budgeted amount by £1,825,000 to £44,326,000; this was as a result of a number of factors including additional income from both pre-registration and post-registration health contracts, increase in tuition fees, additional income generated by the Institutes of Education and Health and through summer lettings. Expenditure has also increased by £1,333,000 to £42,751,000, a major contributor to this increase is the FRS17 adjustment of £731,000.
- 8.2. Members received the report, noting the improved position.

08/09 Students' Union Business [BG08/05]

- 9.1. The Students' Union presented their report to the Board noting that there were three new sabbaticals in post.
- 9.2. Members noted that the Students' Union had drafted a new Constitution which would be proposed to the next Student Council after consultation with Union members. It was also noted that a draft Strategic Plan for 2008-2013 had been drafted.
- 9.3. The Sports and Societies Fair during Freshers Week had been success with a number of new clubs being formed including Film Making, Equestrian, Cycling and Athletics. Proposals have been received for a number of other clubs which are currently being evaluated.
- 9.4. The Students' Union thanked the University's officers for the work carried out at the Battenhall playing fields over the summer. Members noted that the Students' Union had also been working with the University on developing a covered smoking area closer to the SU building.
- 9.5. The Board noted that the Students' Union had been unsuccessful in the final round of funding bids for the new V funding and this mirrored the experience of other Students' Unions nationally. The criteria for the funding has recently been changed and is more relevant to initiatives for age groups up to 18 years. This has resulted in a shortfall of £37,000 income towards staffing costs. The Students' Union is continuing to support Kids Club and Sunday Sport.
- 9.6. The Vice President – Education & Welfare reported that the course representative scheme was being overhauled to ensure representation across all courses. It was also noted that the main issues for students using the Students' Union Student Welfare Support Service were accommodation and finance but the number of enquiries has decreased from previous years.
- 9.7. Members noted that Welcome and Freshers Weeks had been very successful and that the Students' Union's commercial turnover was at its highest level for 5 years. This income was attributed to improvements in the air management system, more extensive staff training, the increase in the number of new students and an extensive mailing to all new and returning

students. There were some issues with noise during the first week both on and off campus but these have now been addressed.

9.8. The Students' Union thanked the University for the significant increase in the block grant.

9.9. The Board received the report.

08/10 Reports from Committees

10.1 Audit Committee [BG08/06]

10.1.1 The Chair of the Audit Committee presented the Committee's report and asked the Board to approve the Annual Risk Management Report. This would then be attached to the Annual Report of the Audit Committee before it was submitted to HEFCE.

10.1.2. The Board approved the report.

10.2 Finance & Development Committee [BG08/07]

10.2.1. The Board noted the report from the Finance & Development Committee.

08/11 Application for Research Degree Awarding Powers [BG08/08]

11.1. The Deputy Vice Chancellor presented the draft application for Research Degree Awarding Powers to the Board and asked members to approve a recommendation that the University should proceed with submission based on one of the two timescales identified in the report, with a final decision being taken by the University's Academic Board at its meeting on the 22nd October 2008.

11.2 Members discussed the recommendation and agreed that the evidence in the report showed that the University met the criteria for Research Degree Awarding Powers and should therefore proceed with the application at Academic Board's discretion.

08/12 Date of Next Meeting

12.1 Monday 1st December 2008

..... (Chair)

..... (Date)