

University of Cambridge

COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held in the Saloon, Madingley Hall, at 10.15 am on Monday 16 March 2015.

Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair); the Master of Corpus Christi, the Master of Jesus, the Mistress of Girton; Professor Anderson, Professor Davis, Professor Karet; Dr Anthony, Mr Caddick, Dr Charles, Dr Good, Dr Holmes, Dr Hutchings, Dr Lingwood, Dr Padman; Mr Lewisohn, Professor Dame Shirley Pearce, Mr Shakeshaft (Deputy Chair), Ms Weller; Ms Hoogewerf-McComb, Mr Jones, Ms van Gijn; with the Registry, the Head of the Registry's Office, the University Draftsman, the Academic Secretary and the Director of Finance; the Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education), the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Institutional Affairs), the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International Strategy) and, for the business recorded as minutes 77–81, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research).

Apologies were received from the Warden of Robinson and Dr Oosthuizen.

The Senior and Junior Proctors were present.

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed Dr Hutchings to her first meeting.

**UNRESERVED BUSINESS**

**PART A: PRELIMINARY, LEGISLATIVE AND STRAIGHTFORWARD BUSINESS**

**69. Declarations of Interest**

Mr Jones, as a candidate in the recent elections to student membership of the Council and the General Board, declared an interest in the matter recorded as 73(d) and as past President of the Graduate Union, declared an interest in the matter recorded as minute 76 ('Council Committee for the Supervision of the Student Unions (CCSSU)'). Otherwise, no personal or prejudicial interests were declared.

**70. Minutes**

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2015 were received and approved subject to a minor amendment.

**Action:** Personal Assistant to the Head of the Registry's Office to web.

**71. Procedure of the Council**

**(a) Arrangements for the chairing of agenda items**

It was proposed that the Vice-Chancellor should chair the ordinary meeting of the Council for all items of business.

## **(b) Business starred as straightforward**

The Registry reported that the officers wished to unstar the matter recorded as minute 73(d) ('Membership of the Council and the General Board: elections for student membership').

Otherwise, the Council approved matters for decision set out in the confirmed starred items.

## **(c) Council Circulars**

The Council noted the issue and approval of the following:

<b>Circular</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Approval</b>
5/15	13 February	23 February
6/15	20 February	2 March
7/15	6 March	16 March

## **72. Vice-Chancellor's Report**

(a) The Vice-Chancellor had attended a Centre for Science and Policy event in Cambridge on 18 February 2015 at which Sir Mark Walport had spoken.

(b) The Vice-Chancellor had attended a UUK meeting in London on 20 February 2015.

(c) Baroness Northover, Parliamentary Under-Secretary in the Department for International Development, had visited the University on 23 February 2015.

(d) The Vice-Chancellor and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International Strategy) had visited Japan and Hong Kong on University business between the 23 February and 5 March 2015.

(e) The Varsity Football Match, which Oxford had won, had taken place on 8 March 2015.

(f) The Vice-Chancellor had delivered an address about 'Equality: Women and Success' on 9 March 2015.

(g) The WiSETI Annual Lecture was delivered by Professor Rachel McKendry on 9 March 2015 on the subject of 'The mobile revolution: from m-health to m-powering women.'

(h) There had been a launch event for the Science Festival on 9 March 2015.

(j) The Vice-Chancellor had hosted a 'Business Dinner' in the Lodge on 10 March 2015.

(i) The Vice-Chancellor had delivered a key note address at an event to celebrate the University of Vienna's 650<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The text of this address was tabled at the meeting.

(j) Work was now underway on the review of the role of the Research Councils which the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills had asked Sir Paul Nurse to undertake. Professor Ottoline Leyser, Professor of Plant Development and Director of the Sainsbury Laboratory, had been appointed to membership of the Advisory Group.

(k) FTWeekend on 14/15 March 2015 had featured an interview with the Vice-Chancellor in which he had discussed the potential implications of any change to the funding arrangements for home undergraduate students; the importance to the University and to the

sector of British membership of the EU; and the negative impact on the recruitment of overseas students of the current rhetoric around immigration. The coverage was tabled at the meeting.

### **73. Council, legislative and comparable matters**

#### **(a) Council Work Plan 2014-15**

The updated Work Plan was received.

#### **(b) Business Committee**

No meeting had been held on 9 March 2015.

#### **(c) Strategic meeting**

It was noted that the spring strategic meeting would follow the present meeting and that the papers had been circulated separately. The notes of the meeting would be circulated when available and the Council would be invited to reflect on the outcomes at its next meeting.

#### **(d) Membership of the Council and the General Board: elections for student membership**

The Registry reported. The outcome of the election for student membership of the Council and the General Board was usually reported to the Council at its March meeting. However, the electoral scheme provided that complaints about the conduct of the election which the complainant did not consider had been resolved by the Elections Committee could be appealed to the Junior Proctor. Such appeals had been submitted with regard to the election for President of the Graduate Union. The Junior Proctor's investigation was ongoing. It would be inappropriate to comment further until that process was concluded. A report would be brought back to the Council, through the Council Committee for the Supervision of the Student Unions, in due course.

The results of the other elections were reported as follows:

#### **COUNCIL**

*Category (i) – All eligible students (2 places)*

Priscilla Mensah, G

Cornelius Roemer, T

#### **GENERAL BOARD**

*Category (i) – All eligible undergraduate students (1 place)*

Robert Cashman, JN

### **74. Sale of the University Dental Practice**

The Business Committee had been asked to approve the recommendations of a working group concerning the sale of the University Dental Practice but had, instead, agreed to refer the matter to the Council for discussion. A revised paper, including further information about the changes to the NHS contract and the finances of the Practice, was received. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Institutional Affairs) as chair of the working group reported.

There was no registration system for NHS dental patients in England. Care was, instead, provided as individual courses of treatment at the end of which there was no requirement that there be any ongoing relationship. Students needing urgent care could therefore choose to use any dental practice with NHS contract places available. There was no shortage of such contract places in Cambridge. The Practice currently held a Personal Dental Service contract which allowed it to restrict its services to University of Cambridge students. The Local Area Health Trust had given notice that it would move the contract to a General Dental Service (GDS) contract. Under a GDS contract, the Practice would be required to provide NHS treatment to anyone who presented themselves at the practice regardless of whether they had any connection with the University.

Further, the Practice was chronically and structurally in deficit. The Practice had made a loss of over £400K over the past four years.

It was therefore neither a viable business in its current form nor would it be able to restrict its services to University of Cambridge students. The working group therefore recommended that the practice be sold. It had also recommended that the University establish a fund to provide financial support to students unable to access necessary emergency treatment under the NHS. The number of such students was likely to be very limited given the available NHS capacity.

It was confirmed that there was nevertheless a market value for the Practice.

It was noted that, although there had been no student representation on the working group, there had been student representation on the Committee of Management of the University Health Services which had considered and supported the proposed sale.

The Council approved the recommendations of the working group and a Notice for publication.

**Action:** Draftsman (publication)

## **75. Membership of the Board of Scrutiny**

Regulation 2 for the election of members of the Board of Scrutiny provided that, if at any election insufficient nominations were received to fill the vacant places in either class (c)(i) or class (c)(ii), the Council should appoint as many members as might be necessary. As had been reported to the Council at its meeting on 16 February, there had been no nominations in the recent election for two members of the Board of Scrutiny in class (c)(ii).

The Council had agreed that the names of potential candidates should be brought back to for consideration at the current meeting. Brief biographies for two individuals were tabled. The Council agreed to appoint Dr Lydia Drumright and Mr Michael Kitson, *CTH*, to the Board of Scrutiny with immediate effect until 30 September 2017.

## **76. Council Committee for the Supervision of the Student Unions (CCSSU)**

Further to the discussion at the Council's meeting on 16 February 2015, the unconfirmed minutes of the CCSSU's meeting on 9 February 2015 were received. It was noted that part of the meeting had been conducted as reserved business, and therefore the relevant minutes had been received under reserved business by the Council, but that there was no need for them to be discussed.

Mr Jones expressed reservations about one sentence in the unreserved minute concerning the GU. It was agreed that this reservation should be communicated to the CCSSU for consideration at its next meeting.

## **77. General Board**

### **(a) General Board minutes**

The unconfirmed minutes of the General Board's meeting on 11 February 2015 were received together with a paper setting out recommendations for actions arising from REF 2014. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) who, in the Vice-Chancellor's absence on University business, had chaired the meeting, and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) reported. The General Board had agreed a range of actions to be undertaken in connection with research performance in general and preparations for the next REF in particular. The Board had agreed that letters of commendation should be sent to Units of Assessment (UoA) which, based on Grade Point Average, had performed particularly well. There would be further discussion between the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), the Head of Institution and the Head of School in the case of UoAs which had not ranked in the top quartile. Discipline-specific Advisory Boards with UK and international membership would be established to provide advice on the research and overall academic environment of the discipline concerned. It was likely that, in many cases, this discipline-specific review process would map onto the REF structure but it would not be driven by it. The General Board was of the view that the Project Board for REF2014 had been an effective governance and oversight mechanism. It had been agreed that a REF2020 Working Group should be established in Easter Term 2015 to consider the membership and terms of reference for an equivalent Project Board and to oversee preparations for REF 2020. It was intended that there should be greater School-level oversight.

It was noted that the recommendations in the paper covered a range of issues. The University's employment arrangements and policies (including, but not restricted to, recruitment and appointment processes; the management of probation; mentoring; staff review and development; reward; title) would also be reviewed. This work would be led by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Institutional Affairs) and taken forward primarily through the HR Committee but also as part of the discipline-based review process. Following further detailed work, a report would be brought back to the Council for discussion.

There would also be a review of the University's academic governance arrangements including the structure and distribution of disciplines within and between Schools and the roles of Heads of Schools and of Faculties and Departments. It would be important to ensure that the University's investment in research infrastructure and facilities reflected current and not historic disciplinary boundaries in order to consolidate activities and improve the research culture and environment.

It was agreed, in the course of discussion, that it would be important to ensure that the various reviews were fully cognisant of the University's teaching as well as research activities.

### **(b) Graduate Admissions**

Professor Anderson raised another matter of General Board business which did not feature in the minutes. He noted that a question regarding unspent criminal convictions had recently been introduced onto graduate application forms (GRADSAF). He considered that this was

a violation of the Data Protection Act and that the information was irrelevant to the admissions process for the majority of graduate courses.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) reported, in response, that it was a question which UCAS had been asking of undergraduate applicants for nearly 10 years and its recent inclusion on the GRADSAF simply created consistency between the processes. The question related only to criminal convictions relevant to the student's studies and residency in Cambridge and to any associated risks. He also noted that there were obligations and duties on the University in this regard including, most recently, as part of the Prevent strategy. The Legal Services Office had confirmed that the collection of the data did not represent a breach of any Data Protection legislation. However, it was recognised that the control of access to the information and its relevance to admissions decisions were a separate matter and one which should be investigated as a matter of urgency. He would refer the matter back to the Board of Graduate Studies.

### **(c) Agreement with the Office for Fair Access (OFFA)**

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) reported that the Council, at its meeting on 20 April 2015, would be asked to approve the University's OFFA agreement for submission by the deadline of 23 April 2015. This timeframe would allow little opportunity for revision following the Council's meeting. A draft document would, therefore, be circulated for comment in advance of the provision of the papers for the Council's meeting. Work was underway to establish appropriate targets. These were likely to be challenging. Student representatives would, as usual, be consulted as part of the drafting process.

## **PART B: MAIN BUSINESS**

### **78. University Finance (a) Budget**

A paper was received setting out key planning assumptions and a first estimate of the Chest and non-Chest budget and the outlook for a further three years. The Council's attention was also drawn to minute 50 of the Finance Committee's discussion at its meeting on 4 March 2015.

The Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor reported. The budget was the output from the Planning Round process which had been initiated in July 2014. Schools and Non-School Institutions had submitted plans during Michaelmas term which had been scrutinised and then aggregated and received by the RMC. The Chest budget normally changed little between this first iteration and the Budget Report which would be provided to the Council for discussion at its meeting on 20 April 2015 and then for approval and signature at its meeting on 18 May 2015. This year, however, amendments were likely to be required following the receipt later in March 2015 of HEFCE's grant letter which would incorporate the University's revised QR funding allocation as a result of REF 2014. It was likely that this would result in a reduction in QR income. An additional meeting of the Resource Management Committee had been scheduled for mid-April 2015 to assess the implications of the grant letter on the Chest budget.

The Chest funded the core operational activities of the University in terms of teaching and research; allocations from the Chest were centrally controlled. There was currently a slight surplus on the Chest forecast for 2015-16, although the funding implications of the REF outcome were likely to take the forecast into deficit. A deficit was forecast for 2016-17. This

derived from an increase in National Insurance contributions and also reflected the fact that reserves which had been built up on the maintenance budget would be spent down by then and the full cost would have to be met from the Chest. It was noted that Schools were starting to spend down the significant reserves which they had built up from Chest funds. It was noted that the current budget forecasts included the bids which School and Non-School Institutions had submitted all of which were considered reasonable and cogently argued. It would be necessary to revisit these decisions if, as anticipated, the outturn with regard to QR funding was negative.

The following is a summary of the points made in discussion:

- Investment in buildings and research infrastructure was essential if the University was to remain internationally competitive and to attract world leading researchers. Such investment had increased significantly in recent years but this followed many decades of under-investment. Likewise, as the University's research base continued to grow and in the face of an increasingly complex regulatory and legislative environment, it would be necessary to increase spend on administrative infrastructure and support. This underpinning infrastructure was integral to the delivery of the University's academic activities to a standard of international excellence.
- It was noted that the circulated paper set out only the budget and forecasts; it did not set out strategic priorities nor did it include a detailed risk register. It was noted that the University's strategic risk register was reviewed biannually by the respective risk owners and the Risk Steering Committee and was then provided to the Council. This review process was currently underway. The Budget and Allocations Report, the first iteration of which the Council would receive at its meeting on 20 April 2015, would provide supporting narrative and context. The strategic and financial parameters which informed the Planning Round guidance were agreed by the PRC each July; the Budget and Allocations Report was the product of this earlier work and reflected the strategic direction set by the Schools and Non-School Institutions.
- It was noted that the University had committed to a growth of 2% p.a. in graduate student numbers. This had not materialised; indeed numbers had fallen. This was a matter of concern for the Colleges because their capital and other plans were predicated on the assumption of an increase in numbers. It was noted that the University's commitment to the 2% p.a. growth strategy had not changed; it simply had not materialised, probably because of an outdated misperception in some Faculties and Departments about graduate number caps. However, it was the view of the Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor that this was only temporary and that number would soon rise. The Graduate Admissions Office had undertaken a survey to establish why successful applicants chose not to take up a place which suggested that the main reason related to the availability of packages of financial support.

## **(b) Finance Committee**

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 4 March 2015 were received. The Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor reported. The University had raised a public bond of £350 million at a rate of 3.75% over forty years in October 2012 primarily to finance Phase 1 of the North West Cambridge Project. The Finance Committee had considered a discussion paper proposing Regent House 'in principle' approval to seek further external financing should the current extraordinary market conditions remain favourable. There were significant opportunities for the development of the University's non-operational estate.

The Committee had welcomed the proposal in principle and had asked to receive a more detailed paper at a future meeting with a clearer business case. If the Committee thereafter recommended that the proposal should proceed, a draft Report would be presented to a future meeting of the Council for discussion and decision.

#### **79. Audit**

The Council noted that the minutes of the Audit Committee's meeting on 5 March 2015 would be circulated for discussion at the Council's meeting on 20 April 2015. Mr Lewisohn, as Chair of the Committee, confirmed that there were no urgent matters for report.

#### **80. North West Cambridge**

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Institutional Affairs reported. There continued to be good progress with the project. In particular, work on the primary school and student accommodation remained on schedule. A planning application for temporary school premises had been submitted to mitigate against any unforeseen delays. However, any decision about the procurement of such a facility could be delayed until later in the year.

Infrastructure delivery, through a site-wide infrastructure contract, continued to be pressured. The Chair of the Syndicate and Director of Estates Strategy had met with the CEO of the infrastructure contractor to seek assurances that the University's concerns were being addressed and would be resolved. The West and North West Cambridge Estates Syndicate would receive and consider the contractor's proposal for remedying the situation at its meeting on 23 March 2015. The Project Team was developing and evaluating alternative options including the implications in terms of both cost and timetable; these would also be considered by the Syndicate.

It was agreed that there should be a full update report at the Council's meeting on 20 April 2015.

#### **81. University employment Human Resources Committee**

The Council noted that the minutes of the HR Committee's meeting on 12 March 2015 would be circulated for discussion at the Council's meeting on 20 April 2015. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Institutional Affairs), as Chair of the Committee, confirmed that there were no urgent matters for report.

### **PART C: RESERVED BUSINESS**

#### **72. Council Committee for the Supervision of the Student Unions (CCSSU)**

The Council received the reserved minutes of the CCSSU's meeting on 9 February 2015.

Vice-Chancellor  
20 April 2015