

## **BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held at 3.00pm on Tuesday, 7 July 2009 in Room 2S601, Frenchay campus

Present: Gillian Camm (Chairman), Bob Barnett, Rosamund Blomfield-Smith, Nigel Costley, Sherrie Eugene-Hart, Prof Paul Gough, Iain Gray, Dr Jane Harrington, Wil Harris, Matt Hughes, John Laycock, Katy Phillips, Rt Rev Barry Rogerson, Lise Seager, Prof Graham Upton, Graham van der Lely, Prof Steve West

Apologies: Chris Booy, Sonia Mills

In Attendance: David Hunter (for minutes G09.7.1-4), Bill Marshall, Katie Owen-Jones, Dom Passfield, John Rushforth, Graham Stevens (for minutes G09.7.1-4), Jeremy Wheatcroft (for minutes G09.7.1-4)

## **MEMBERSHIP**

G09.7.1 The Chairman welcomed Katy Phillips and Prof Graham Upton to their first meeting of the Board.

## **FRENCHAY CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT**

G09.7.2 The Strategic Options Report for the Frenchay Campus masterplan was received, Paper G09/7/1, which presented the design options for the development strategy. The Vice-Chancellor and members of the team made a presentation covering the background to the masterplanning exercise, the local context, the underlying criteria and assumptions, and the options to develop a single campus using the current Frenchay buildings and developing onto the former Hewlett Packard land. They also referred to the ongoing issues to be addressed in more detail in the next stages, including: affordability; changing accommodation needs; and the Rapid Transport links. The Development Board was recommending one of the options, the 'integrated option', to the Board of Governors, to guide the strategic direction in the further development of a masterplan which would be brought back to the Board in the autumn.

G09.7.3 The Board asked questions and engaged in a discussion covering a wide range of issues. The issue of prime importance was the overarching vision and strategy for the University, which would underpin the masterplan and steer the development of the estate over the next 15 or so years. It was important to the Board to be able to relate the plans back to the vision. The Vice-Chancellor's view was that UWE was about: knowledge and learning partnerships; working as 'one University'; being demand-led; engaging with the external world through links with external communities and organisations. That meant providing space for learning and social engagement that staff and students wanted to be in, and mixed-use space, and also creating an environment for the outward focus including the Enterprise Park and social space, for instance for performing arts. It was difficult to foresee what the University would look like in 25 years' time, but

to be taken into account were: the impact of new technology; changes in the student and the staff population; changes in the nature of teaching and learning and patterns of study through the year; changing transport expectations. Although the masterplanning exercise was to meet current needs, it also had to build in flexibility for 'future proofing'.

#### G09.7.4

The discussion also covered the following.

- It was agreed that the development of a 'centre' or 'heart' to the campus had to be developed, and this needed to be more about people and bringing them together, than about a physical centre. How that was achieved would also reflect what UWE was about. For instance it might be a social learning space for staff and students together or a location for performing arts. One of the positive aspects of the outlying campuses was the sense of community, and it would be vital to try to create that at Frenchay.
- Once the masterplan was in place, there would need to be careful consideration of the priorities and development plan. The pros and cons of the various options eg infrastructure development, an iconic building or a building that everyone could engage with, would have to be weighed up in terms of need and the impact for staff and students. It was important not to overlook current students who would not benefit from future developments.
- The location of a Rapid Transit route and bus routes in and around the campus.
- The need for flexibility in the design of learning and teaching spaces, so that it was able to cater for future developments as yet unknown. Also, an understanding that the use of buildings could change over time.
- Technological change and how that would impact on the learning environment. It was recognised that this was difficult to assess, but there had to be an attempt to look ahead.
- The wisdom of splitting residential accommodation across the site, and whether it would be better grouped together. A student accommodation strategy would be developed once the masterplan was complete.
- The campus and facilities would have to meet the, sometimes conflicting, needs of a wide range of different groups who would be using it.
- The importance of an environmentally friendly and sustainable campus.

#### G09.7.5

The Board thanked and congratulated everyone involved in the development for achieving so much within such a tight timeframe. The Board:

- i) **APPROVED** the 'integrated' Option 1 as a basis for the development of a detailed masterplan and report;
- ii) identified the following other elements that it would like to see explored further for incorporation into the masterplan: consideration of a single building at the centre rather than two (3 and 4); that potential use of HP Building 2 should be explored further, to help reduce the number of new buildings; discussions with HEFCE about moving to another building; that the conference facilities (11) should be considered as a possible early development; not to rule out an eco village as an option at this stage; to continue to explore a swimming pool but not at a cost to the University; that the rapid transport through the campus to be protected, though it was not the preferred route; distribution of dual use facilities including building on the periphery of the campus; the development of an energy strategy. It was also important to continue to monitor the situation regarding the land that would permit the rapid transport route.
- iii) granted delegated authority to the Vice-Chancellor to modify the option for development in the light of the outcomes of public consultation if

necessary.

The Board looked forward to receiving the masterplan in November.

Minutes G09.7.6-9 are confidential to the Board.

## **MINUTES**

- G09.7.10 The minutes of the meetings held on 29 April and 7 May 2009 were confirmed as accurate.

## **HARTPURY COLLEGE**

- G09.7.11 Further to minute G09.5.12, the Vice-Chancellor reported that he and the Principal of the College had worked out a way forward that was acceptable for both the University and the College, which would underpin a stronger relationship for the future. The details were being worked through, and the academic memorandum and the financial memorandum would be brought to both Boards for approval as soon as possible.

## **PAY NEGOTIATIONS**

- G09.7.12 Further to minute G09.5.29, the Vice-Chancellor reported on progress with the national pay negotiations. The Unions were now seeking to include a no-redundancy agreement, which was outside the terms of reference. It was thought that that might have led to some of the increase in local activity being seen around the country. It was noted that even without a cost of living increase, the University would face a 1.5% increase in the pay bill in 2009/10.

Minutes G09.7.13 – 15 are confidential to the Board.

## **THE FUTURE FOR LANGUAGE PROVISION AT UWE**

- G09.7.16 Received, Paper G09/7/4, a report that had previously been considered by Academic Board, summarising the recent reviews of language provision at UWE and the Vice-Chancellor's proposals arising there from. Governors had also received a letter from the University and College Union (UCU) setting out information about its formal dispute with the University, and a brief response from the Executive to the points made. The Vice-Chancellor reported on: the reviews that had been undertaken and the opportunity for staff in the Department to engage with those; that the review he had initiated had taken into account the wider view of the current and prospective state of languages in the UK; that in making a decision about recruitment for 2009 entry, his main concern was the applicants and ensuring that they were informed in sufficient time to pursue alternative routes; the Department's financial position; and that opening and closing awards for a particular intake were management decisions that were taken in the normal course of operation. He went on to explain the process that had been followed, the advice taken, and that the only decision that had been made so far was to close three half awards based on the information available from the reviews. The Faculty was now starting an exercise looking at what languages at UWE might look like in the future.
- G09.7.17 The Vice-Chancellor summarised that the campaign led by the UCU was concerned mainly with the process and the lack of consultation with the Union – which he emphasised was not usual in such matters. Both the Department and UCU wanted the decision to be reversed and to wait until clearing to see if more students could be recruited then. Other issues had also been raised,

such as: the increasing 'business orientation' of the University, and the emphasis on meeting the market demand; and the claim that the academic base of the University was being eroded. The Vice-Chancellor did not want to have to move out of areas of provision, but the Departments had to look at what students and others wanted now and in the future and to review its provision in view of that change. Some areas were more successful in adapting their provision than others.

G09.7.18

In the discussion, the following points were covered:

- the national picture: that although the government and others were putting in place measures to address the issue of language learning, they would take some years to work through to HE; the over-supply of HE places in languages and that all universities were under similar pressure;
- the importance of the experience of students when they are here
- that the University was about more than what the market wanted, but that provision had to be sustainable and could not be at the expense of ongoing cross-subsidy from other areas;
- the situation had been discussed with all applicants for 2009 entry, the majority of whom had transferred onto other programmes at UWE, and the others had insurance places to take up;
- why the problems with recruitment had not been acted on sooner when they had been evident for some years, and that managers at all levels needed to be better at using data and looking ahead, anticipating change and adapting programmes to suit;
- the Students' Union was pleased that applicants had been accommodated, but were more concerned with the experience of continuing students. They had a commitment from the University that the experience was assured, but they would pursue that if necessary;
- a concern was raised about the perception that the University was taking an overly 'business' approach, and it was important to show that such decisions were not purely financially and market based;
- that there needed to be a constructive relationship between the trades unions and the University, which was the responsibility of both parties;
- that it was far too early to have to consider staffing matters, and that would only come in to consideration when options for the future were developed.

The Vice-Chancellor concluded by saying that the resolution that was being sought – to reverse the decision – would not be met, but that the Executive did want to work with the staff to look at the future of languages in the University, to make it sustainable, and to help them progress that work.

G09.7.19

The Board regretted that the University had had to arrive at this position. However, it accepted the findings, supported the Vice-Chancellor in the decision made and endorsed the further action proposed.

#### **OUTCOMES OF THE PLANNING ROUND 2008/09**

G09.7.20

Received, Paper G09/7/5, an overview of the outcomes of the Strategic Planning Round 2008/09, including the top priority projects that the University would focus on over the next three years. Members welcomed the paper. They noted in particular the substantial programme of change that was planned, much of which was institution-wide, which would be overseen and monitored by the Vice-Chancellor's executive team.

## **APPOINTMENTS TO THE BOARD**

- G09.7.21 The Board received recommendations from the Nominations and Governance Committee for the re-appointment of independent and co-opted governors (Paper G09/7/6). The Board **RESOLVED:**
- i) to re-appoint Chris Booy and Iain Gray as independent governors for a further term, to 31 July 2012;
  - ii) to re-appoint as a co-opted member, Graham van der Lely for a final term of office.
- The Board also **AGREED** that the elections for staff governors be deferred until after the discussion of the Board's role and purpose in the autumn.

## **STUDENTS' UNION CONSTITUTION**

- G09.7.22 The SRC President reported that the new sabbatical team had just taken up post and would be reviewing the draft constitution over the next few weeks. She hoped to bring the revised constitution to the Board meeting in October. It was noted that the Charity Commission had not yet produced the promised guidance for students unions on the implications of the Charities Act 2006.

Minutes G09.7.23 – 25 are confidential to the Board.

## **MATTERS REFERRED BY ACADEMIC BOARD**

- G09.7.26 Received, Paper G09/7/8, changes to the Academic Regulatory Framework as approved by the Academic Board at its meeting on 10 June 2009. The Board was reminded that it was required to ratify such changes. The Board **ASSENTED TO** the changes as follows:
- i) changes to the Academic Regulations as set out in Paper G09/7/8, designed to mitigate the consequences of: the outcomes of a recent HEFCE audit of the University's HESES return; and concerns about the perceived existence of a 'resit culture' amongst students;
  - ii) redefinition of the roles and responsibilities of external advisers and related matters;
  - iii) variation to the Academic Regulations (G1.8.6-7) to meet the expectations of the Conservatoire of Dance and Drama;
  - iv) variations to the regulations for the PGCert Professional Practice and Management in Architecture;
  - v) variations to the regulations for the Legal Practice course and the PGDip Legal Practice;
  - vi) the addition of the awards of Masters Teaching and Learning and of PGDip Teaching and Learning to the Academic Regulations;
  - vii) variations to the Academic Regulations to support the International Variants to existing UWE programmes.

## **VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**

- G09.7.27 Paper G09/7/9, a report from the Vice-Chancellor summarising matters recently considered by the Senior Management Team and not appearing elsewhere on the agenda, was received and noted.

## **GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

- G09.7.28 A briefing note on the implications of the Board's decision to reduce the size of the Board was received and noted (Paper G09/7/10).

The Board received a number of documents for information, as follows.

#### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

- G09.7.29 The Board noted a report on action taken by the Chairman since the last meeting of the Board in May (Paper G09/7/11).

#### **CURRENT DELEGATIONS**

- G09.7.30 The Board noted the current specific delegations of authority to the Chairman, the Emergency Committee and others (Paper G09/7/12).

#### **COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

- G09.7.31 The Board received and noted draft minutes or notes of the following meetings (Paper G09/7/13):  
Diversity Committee – 6 May 2009  
Finance and IT Committee – 8 June 2009  
Estates Committee – 15 June 2009  
Audit Committee – 22 June 2009  
Human Resources Committee – 1 July 2009  
Students'/Governors' Forum – 27 April 2009  
and a report of:  
Nominations and Governance Committee – 15 June 2009

#### **ACADEMIC BOARD**

- G09.7.32 Noted, Paper G09/7/14, the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2009.

#### **UNIVERSITY COMPANIES AND DIRECTORS**

- G09.7.33 Received, Paper G09/7/15, a report of the companies wholly owned by the University and those in which it has a minority interest.

#### **CORPORATE SEAL**

- G09.7.34 Noted, the documents sealed since the last meeting (Paper G09/7/16).

#### **DATES OF MEETINGS 2009/10**

- G09.7.35 6 October 2009, 24 November 2009, 26 January 2010, 23 March 2010, 18 May 2010, 6 July 2010

#### **GOVERNORS**

- G09.7.36 On behalf of the Board, the Chairman thanked Nigel Costley and Dom Passfield for their contribution to the work of the Board and to the University over the last few years, and wished them well for the future. She also congratulated Sherrie Eugene-Hart on her recent marriage.

Meeting closed 6.15 pm.