

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

ASSEMBLY

Minutes of the meeting of the Assembly held on 20 April 2015

Present: Thrift, Nigel (Vice-Chancellor and President, Chair); Ahearne, Catherine; Alexander, Georgina; Anderson, Katie; Anderson, Helen; Anderson-Gough, Fiona; Ashley, Tim; Atwood, Larry; Barwick Lisa; Beaufoy Sandra; Bell, Jo; Blindauer, Claudia; Boero, Gianna; Britten, Tom; Brown, Kiley; Brown, David; Burchfiel, Anna; Butcher, Des; Calvert, Alicia; Chandler, Martin; Cherrington, Helen; Christie, Delphine; Coleman, Jane; Corvi, Peter; Crampton, Sheelagh; Croft, Stuart; Cunningham, Richard; Dalziel, Kim; Days, Malcolm; Dixon, Ann; Doan, Vinh; Docherty, Thomas; Drinkwater, Rosie; Dunn, Peter; Ellison, Susan; Evans, Suzanne; Fenn, Catherine; Fisher, James; Green, Robin; Harper, Simon; Harrison, Daniel; Hemlock, Catryn; Higgins, Andrew; Hopkins, Louisa; Horsburgh, Jo; Horton, Robert; Howard, Richard; Hughes, Dean; Hutton, Jane; Ireland, Helen; Isoni, Andrea; Jeary, Julie; Johal, Kam; Johansen, Adam; Kalvala, Sara; Katz, Daniel; Keene, Janet; Kennell, Mark; Kershaw, Glenda; Khan, Mia; Kirby, Victoria; Klaus, Andrea; Lain, Michael; Lindsell, Nikki; Lynch, Natasha; Malin, Alexander; Mallinson, Nick; Mason, David; Mattock Barylo, Kimberley; Maylor, Elizabeth; McClenaghan, Samuel; McConville, Chris; McGrath, Mary; McGrattan, Gillian; McQuillan, Anne; Meesum, Pete; Mercer, Justine; Miller, Stuart; Mills, Geraldine; Murrain, Lucinda; Naidoo, Urvasi; Owen, David; Packwood, Roger; Pitman, John; Preston, Lesley; Punch, Mary; Reece, Ben; Reeve, Andrew; Reid, Katie; Richardson, Kevin; Riley, Helen; Ritchley, Anna; Robinson, James; Rowley, Ian; Rupp, William; Salter Wright, Yvonne; Schmitz, Helmut; Seager, Richard; Silvester, Carolyn; Smith, Andrew; Smith, James; Smith, Viv; Smith, Emma; Smith, Mark; Smyth, Jennifer; Stacey, Sarah; Steel, Mark; Thomas, Pamela; Thorpe, Terry; Toner, Helen; Van Rens, Thijs; Walker, Stephen; Walker, Clare; Way, Helen; Whalley, Elizabeth; Wilkes, Steve; Williamson, Paul; Wilson, Anne; Wilson, Wendy; Wood, Sarah; Wooldridge Smith, Roberta; Wright, Graham; Youlton, Michael

In attendance: Sloan, Ken (Registrar and Chief Operating Officer, Secretary); Battams, Elizabeth; Bowskill, Jenny; Brandist, Derek; Byrne, Sally; Chennery, Kelly; Coyle, Elizabeth; du Plessis, Laura; Eales, Sian; English, Claire; Evans, Janet; Freeman, Rona; Holcroft, Sarah; Holman, Rachael; Howarth, Rachel; Jenkins, Kirsty; Joskey, Leighton; Leech, Dennis; Lees, Becky; McCann, Bill; Peak, Emma; Pears, Katherine; Pithouse, Benjamin; Sandilands, Samantha; Scinaldi, Domenica; Thomas, Alison; Walker, Carol; Wallis, Darren (Assistant Secretary); Zaccarelli, Esther.

7/14-15 Confirmation of Quoracy

REPORTED:

That the meeting of the Assembly was quorate based on there being more than 50 members of staff present as required in the Standing Orders.

8/14-15 Chair's Business

REPORTED (by the Vice-Chancellor and President):

That the agenda, together with the Standing Orders, had been made available to members online via Insite since the date of announcing the meeting: 7 April 2015.

9/14-15 Conflicts of Interest

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That, should any members or attendees of the Assembly meeting have any conflicts of interest relating to agenda items for the meeting, these should be declared.

NOTE: No declarations were made.

10/14-15 Standing Orders of the Assembly

REPORTED (by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer):

- (a) That, given the nature of the topic of the meeting, all members of staff who were members of, or eligible to be members of, the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) had been invited to join the Assembly for this meeting.
- (b) That whilst the Assembly was not a decision-making body, it could make recommendations to the Council or to the Senate.
- (c) That this meeting of the Assembly was being held to outline the final proposals in relation to changes to USS.
- (d) That members must address the Chair, noting that any member who wished to speak must raise their hand, and speak only on the invitation of the Chair.
- (e) That in order to facilitate the smooth-running of the meeting, a member who was invited to speak should wait for a hand-held microphone to be brought to them, and should clearly state their name prior to speaking.
- (f) That members must not speak more than twice upon any question, other than to speak on a point of order, information or clarification of a point that they have previously raised.
- (g) That the decision of the Chair was final.

11/14-15 Overview of the USS Consultation Process

RECEIVED:

A presentation on the USS consultation (to be made available online), together with oral reports from the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Human Resources.

REPORTED: (by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer)

- (a) That the USS consultation was a formal legal process by which potential changes (and their rationale) were communicated to those affected, but was also a mechanism for individuals to understand their impact and express their views.
- (b) That the USS employer consultations undertaken during 2014 were used by the University to provide a forum for individual commentary, and an informed and independent view of the options was reached at the meeting of the Council in November 2014.
- (c) That the University had offered Warwick-specific pensions education sessions to those affected, and had called this meeting of the Assembly to provide an additional opportunity for commentary to be voiced and opinion captured.
- (d) That, since March 2015, USS had provided hard copy written material to all members and potential members, together with access to the USS consultation website for information, modelling and provision of feedback.
- (e) That USS had made some changes to its original assumptions following the University's response to the employer consultation in 2014, noting that the view that further changes were needed would be reiterated as part of the University's additional commentary to the Trustees before the deadline on 31 May 2015.
- (f) That there was a legal requirement for further consultation should there be any changes to residual issues that resulted in a material impact on USS members, for example, death in service benefits, retirement due to ill health, and that clarification of any changes to these would be sought from USS.
- (g) That the completion of individual responses to the USS consultation prior to the deadline of 22 May 2015 was strongly encouraged.

(by the Director of Human Resources)

- (h) That the University recognised the complexity of USS and the issues raised by this consultation, including AVCs.
- (i) That approximately 400 employees had attended the University's Warwick-specific pensions education sessions on the proposed changes to USS.
- (j) That key changes affecting individual USS members included employee contribution rates rising to 8% (with employer contributions increasing to 18%) and the closure of the final salary section, with all individuals moving to Career Revalued Benefits (CRB) scheme.
- (k) That the future accrual of benefits for those in the final salary scheme would inflate by CPI rather than actual earnings, and accrual rates into the new CRB scheme would be 1/75th of salary for each year rather than 1/80th.
- (l) That, as at Friday 17 April 2015, only 12 individual responses from the University of Warwick had been submitted to the USS consultation, and that she also strongly encouraged the completion of individual responses to the consultation prior to the deadline of 22 May 2015.

- (m) That the Trustees would consider the responses to the USS consultation in June/July 2015 and pass any changes to the JNC to finalise decisions.
- (n) That further information about the final agreed benefit structure was expected to be made available to all employees in Autumn 2015, with 1 April 2016 noted as the earliest possible date for the implementation of any changes.

(in general discussion):

- (o) That the Universities and Colleges Union (UCU) had rejected the proposals at its 2015 AGM.
- (p) That the UCU had welcomed the University's decision to take independent legal advice and make its own representations to the USS as part of the consultation.
- (q) That the UCU, as well as Professor Jane Hutton and Professor Dennis Leech were able to provide information and commentary on the proposals to inform individual responses to the consultation.
- (r) That some members of the Assembly had raised concerns with the USS regarding the methodology for its scheme calculations.
- (s) That there were a number of follow-on changes that might have material impact on individuals but had not yet been fully articulated or consulted upon, and that individuals were encouraged to consider these and to consult the University Pensions Manager on individual matters.
- (t) That it was important for individuals to engage directly in the consultation in order to understand the proposals and make the range and strength of views known to the USS.

Note: There was no motion to discuss at the meeting so no resolution was required.