

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Strategy Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Strategy Committee held on 26 February 2004

Present: Vice-Chancellor (in the Chair), Mr P Dodd, Professor R G Dyson, Mr C Foy, Professor J Jones, Mr J Leighfield, Professor M McCrae, Professor A McFarlane, Dr I Nussey, Professor S B Palmer, Professor H Thomas, Professor M Whitby, Mr B Woods-Scawen.

Apologies: Professor A Easton, Ms S J Hobson, Mr R Jones, Professor A Mullender.

In Attendance: Acting Registrar, Academic Registrar, Estates Officer, Finance Director, University Secretary.

MINUTES

5/03-04 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 October 2003 be approved.

6/03-04 Vice-Chancellor's Business

RECEIVED:

(a) HE Funding and Tuition Fees

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Vice-Chancellor on the progress of the Higher Education Bill through Parliamentary procedures and the recent publication by the DfES of arrangements for the operation of the Office for Fair Access (OFFA).

(b) HRI

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Vice-Chancellor on the progress being made with the merger of HRI with Warwick, to take effect from 1 April 2004, noting that he was meeting with the Director of the BBSRC to discuss research funding for HRI and that the proposed terms of the merger would be considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee by the Group established by Council at its meeting on 12 December.

(c) NHSU

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the University's bid to become the principal academic partner of the National Health Service University had been successful and that discussions were underway to define the precise nature of the partnership and the role to be played by the University in supporting NHSU's objective of gaining University status in the medium term.

(d) Faculty Advisory Boards

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (i) That the second meeting of the Arts and Social Studies Faculty Advisory Boards were to be held shortly, that arrangements were being made for the second Science Faculty Advisory Board meeting to be held in the summer term and that the proposed membership of the Advisory Board for the Faculty of Medicine was currently being finalised.
- (ii) That arrangements were in hand to enhance communication and engagement with existing Faculty Advisory Board members including the creation of a dedicated web site and the association of external Advisory Board members with the activities of individual academic departments.

(e) Transparent Accounts and Financial Transparency

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That progress was being made to improve the University's transparent accounting procedures and the presentation of transparent accounting documentation for management and planning purposes.

7/03-04 Student Enrolments 2003/04

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A report on student enrolments in October 2003 compared with targets set within the University Student Number and Financial Plans reporting an overall shortfall in forecast student fee income of £2.52m for the academic year 2003-04 (JCSSC.4/03-04).
- (b) An oral report from the Acting Registrar outlining the key reasons for the shortfall in student fee income for 2003-04 and the action being taken to improve the processes for student number planning in the future and to ensure the provision of accurate data on student fee income across all recruitment categories at an earlier stage in the academic year than had been the case hitherto.
- (c) An oral report from the Finance Director noting:
 - (i) That analysis of projections and financial data prepared from the second quarter figures on income and expenditure indicated that, notwithstanding the shortfall in student fee income, the University

was projected to achieve a financial surplus in excess of £1m for the academic year 2003/04.

- (ii) That the impact of the shortfall in projected student fee income on the Financial Plan in future years would require further analysis which would be undertaken during the course of the coming financial planning round.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That it be noted that, while there had been a shortfall in the projected student fee income incorporated within the Financial Plan, targets had been set at 15% above those achieved in 2002/03 and actual student fee income for 2003/04 represented a significant increase of 10% on the previous year's student fee income which compared favourably with the University's competitor institutions.
- (b) That the shortfall in forecast student fee income for 2003/04 and the action being taken to improve the student number planning processes, including greater integration of the setting of student recruitment targets at University and departmental level, be noted.
- (c) That, in the light of the steps being taken to provide accurate data on student fee income across all recruitment categories at an earlier stage in the academic year, information on projected and actual student fee income be provided, in future years, for the consideration of the Strategy Committee during the Autumn Term.

8/03-04 University Corporate and Financial Plans

RECEIVED:

A copy of the approved arrangements for review of the University Corporate and Strategic Plan for 2003/04 (JCSSC.6/03-04).

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A report from the informal meeting of the Council held on 3 February 2004 (JCSSC.7/03-04).
- (b) The broad strategic objectives and framework for the Corporate and Strategic Plan.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the basis on which the revised University Corporate and Financial Plans be developed in the coming months encompass the broad strategic objectives incorporated within the existing University Corporate Plan together with an increased focus on the following areas:
 - (i) Internationalisation of the University;
 - (ii) Research Strategy;
 - (iii) Residential Accommodation Strategy;
 - (iv) Library Resourcing.

- (b) That the Committee endorse the following views of the Council in regard to the introduction of tuition fees reached at its meeting on 3 February 2004 after extensive internal consultation commencing in Autumn 2002:
 - (i) That should the Higher Education Bill be passed the University introduce student tuition fees from 2006 at the level of £3000 for all undergraduate honours degree programmes.
 - (ii) That further consideration be given to the tuition fees payable by 2+2, Foundation Degree, part-time and mature students.
 - (iii) That, while the precise allocation of tuition fee income accruing to the University would require the development of detailed priorities, the principles upon which that income would be invested would be determined by the objective of improving the University experience for students through:
 - (A) A package of measures for widening participation and student support.
 - (B) Infrastructure, such as teaching laboratories and library provision.
 - (C) Staff, in order to improve staff-student ratios and to attract and retain high calibre academic staff.

9/03-04 University Endowment Strategy

CONSIDERED:

Proposals for a University Endowment and Donation Investment Policy (JCSSC.8/03-04).

RESOLVED:

That further work be undertaken on the detail of the proposed University Endowment and Donation Investment Policy, in the light of the points raised in discussion at the meeting and in consultation with a wider group including one or two members of the Council, in advance of the proposed Policy being considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

10/03-04 Visit of Richard Lambert

REPORTED:

- (a) That Richard Lambert would be visiting the University on 29 April to discuss the Lambert Review Report on Business/Industry Collaboration.
- (b) That it was the intention to convene a meeting of the Strategy Committee on this date to meet with Mr Lambert.

11/03-04 HRI Advisory Board

RECEIVED:

A copy of the membership and terms of reference of the HRI Advisory Board (JCSSC.9/03-04).

12/03-04 Date of the Next Meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Committee would be held at 10am on Thursday 6 May 2004 in the Council Chamber, Senate House.