

BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SPONSOR BOARD

TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2015
4:00 PM IN ROOM 202, SKINNER BUILDING

Present

Mr David Babb
Professor David Head
Mr Stephen Deville
Professor Jayne Mitchell
Mr Roger Mosey (via Skype)
The Rev Canon Professor Peter Neil

In attendance

Dr Anne Craven, Registrar and Secretary
Dr Grahame Killey, Planning & Performance Manager
Ms Emma Smeaton, Governance Officer & PA to University Council

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed members to the third formal meeting of the Sponsor Board as part of the implementation of the Council-approved BGU Strategy for 2014-19.

It was NOTED that although Roger Mosey would take part in the meetings via Skype he no longer considered it to be ideal for him to Chair in this way. David Head was therefore appointed the new Chair of the Sponsor Board.

2. Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of the last meeting held on 24 February 2015

The minutes of the last meeting held on 24 February 2015 were RECEIVED by the Board and APPROVED as a true and accurate record. The Chair was authorised to sign them.

Action

5. Matters arising

(i) Action points

The Board RECEIVED and NOTED the table of actions from the last meeting.

(ii) Any other matters

The membership of Sponsor Board was DISCUSSED and it was AGREED that two further non-executive members would be asked to join via University Council.

It was NOTED that the role of the Sponsor Board was to aid implementation of the Strategy and although members AGREED that the frequency of meeting was correct it would be helpful to have monthly e-mail updates circulated to Council. A discussion between the Chair of University Council and the Vice Chancellor would take place outside the meeting to clarify what is to be communicated.

University
Council

RM/PN

6. Strategy themes

(i) Strategy theme updates

The Strategy theme leads summarised achievements during 2014-15.

- Academic Portfolio

The Deputy Vice Chancellor REPORTED that a large validation and re-validation schedule had been completed and the internal auditors had given reasonable assurance. Work was continuing to provide Heads of School with relevant management data and market information programme by programme to support portfolio implementation and further portfolio planning.

- Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement

The Deputy Vice Chancellor REPORTED that significant progress had been made with the development of a revised Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Student Engagement Strategy. A Learning and Teaching Conference would take place in June to take forward implementation of the Strategy in 2015/16. Funding had been made available for a Student Engagement Officer to progress a key part of the Strategy in 2015/16.

The Deputy Vice Chancellor also REPORTED that she has taken on a new national role in the Learning Gain project which would focus on improving the student experience.

- Research

The Deputy Vice Chancellor REPORTED on the positive outcome from REF 2014 with BGU having three areas of research deemed to be world class with a funding allocation linked to this. Five research clusters have been agreed and will be a key to implementing the new Research Strategy.

The Chair welcomed the success of the REF 2014 outcome and highlighted the relevance to the research agenda of the appointment of the Executive Director Research and Knowledge Exchange (EDRKE), David Rae, who will take up his post at BGU in October 2015.

- Internationalisation

It was NOTED that the University had not filled its allocation of 20 international student visas for two years. This made BGU vulnerable to having its Highly Trusted Sponsor licence removed, which in turn would put a burden on the University to get it back. Although the academic portfolio had not been particularly attractive to international students in the past, steps had been taken through the Portfolio Review to enhance its appeal, and the process of curriculum internationalisation was making good progress. The first BG Global event and Strategy Implementation bulletin were NOTED.

- Environment

It was NOTED that work was progressing on space utilisation on campus linked to the revised student number projections to 2019. Capital investment would be adjusted accordingly. Work on Phase 1 of the re-modelling of Constance Stewart Hall was progressing well and on track for completion in Sept. 2015.

- Employability & Entrepreneurship

It was NOTED that the appointment of the EDRKE (as mentioned above) was key to making progress under this Theme in the future, as it was one of his main areas of expertise. The Deputy Vice Chancellor also REPORTED on work to develop an entrepreneurial campus through student employability awards.

- Community University

The Registrar and Secretary REPORTED on work under this Theme, including a review of BGU's engagement with partner schools and options to become engaged in school governance through the academy programme. BGU was also considering the merits of signing the National Manifesto on Public Engagement (taken up by several UK universities) to support work to enhance BGU's Community focus through developing links with Community bodies and faith groups. Work on the Community University strand was progressing well.

- Change Management Programme

In commenting on progress made under the Strategy Themes, the scale of change that had happened at BGU over the last eight months was NOTED by the Chair. It was agreed that the large scale of this programme, its urgency and the progress made in implementing it should be communicated internally to all staff. The Chair also highlighted the role of the Strategy Sponsor Board as an agent of change to support this process together with the University Council.

- (ii) Overview of performance dashboard

The Chair NOTED the performance dashboard. In spite of its intrinsic limitations, it was agreed that it should be retained for the time being. However, the bullet point summaries on the front page of the dashboard should do more to reflect the progress and successes achieved under each of the Strategy Themes as well as identifying the outstanding challenges.

VC/PPM

7. Strategy budget

- (i) Expenditure update

The Board RECEIVED the Strategy budget update presented by the PPM who REPORTED that:

- Work on Phase 1 of the re-modelling of Constance Stewart Hall was progressing well and was on track for completion in Sept. 2015.
- Other Strategy funding allocated to projects was mostly spent as outlined in the Strategy Budget report, but there would be some uncommitted funds as savings in 2014/15.
- There would be no Strategy Implementation Fund in 2015/16. Activities under the Strategy Themes would be included in the Business Plans and Budgets of Areas and Departments.

8. Agenda suggestions

The Chair highlighted the importance of additional external contextual information in relation to the Strategy Themes, e.g. placing development of the academic portfolio in relation to wider developments facing the HE sector.

9. Any other business

Recalling suggestions made at the latest Governance and Nominations Committee in May 2015, the Chair asked the DVC to give a presentation on the implementation of the Five Year Strategy to University Council at the working lunch prior to the next Council meeting on 24 June 2015. This should include updates on progress, but also some reflections on the external higher education environment and especially on the challenges facing BGU and on the extent to which the 2014-19 Strategy prepares BGU to deal with these challenges.

DVC

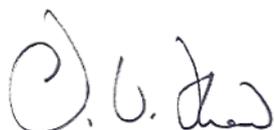
10. Key items for University Council

As Item 9.

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Sponsor Board is scheduled for Tuesday 3 November 2015 at 4:00 pm. However, the Chair asked the Registrar & Secretary to look at re-arranging the meeting and subsequent ones to a morning session lasting up to 2 hours, because the current time slot made it difficult for some members to attend for its duration and for the Sponsor Board to do justice to the reports.

AKC



04/11/15

Signed

Date