LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on 20 May 2016

PRESENT: Pro-Chancellor (in the Chair); Vice-Chancellor; Professor A. M. Atherton; Mr D. Barron; Dr R. Boumphrey; Mr J. R. Carr; Mr M. J. Dormer; Professor J. Garside; Mrs R. Georgiou; Professor S. Guy; Mr W. Hedley; Mr I. Johnson; Professor N. Johnson; Professor K. C. Jones; Mr L. King; Mr E. McLaughlin; Baroness Neville-Jones; Professor J. F. O’Hanlon; Professor E. Ritchie; Dr J. Taylor; Mrs V. Young.

IN ATTENDANCE: Professor S. Bradley; Professor A. G. Chetwynd; Professor S. P. Decent; Mr S. Franklin; Dr H. Hardie; Professor S. R. A. Huttly; Ms N. C. Owen; Ms J. Prudence; Mrs S. J. Randall-Paley; Mr M. Swindlehurst.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Mr J. O’Neill; Mr A. Warriner

CO.16/24 Declaration of interest

Ref: CA.2

There were no declarations of interest.

CO.16/25 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 11 March 2016

Ref: CA.3; documents: SEC/2016/2/0507; SEC/2016/2/0367

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2016.

CO.16/26 Matters Arising: The Work Foundation

Ref: CA.4; document: SEC/2016/2/0556 (Restricted and Commercial in Confidence)
ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

CO.16/27 Vice-Chancellor’s Update and Questions to the Executive

Ref: CA.5

The Vice-Chancellor presented an update on several matters which had been included in the recent monthly reports from the Executive, and drew particular attention to the following points.

(i) The Chinese Ministry of Education had given formal approval for the establishment of Lancaster University College at Beijing Jiaotong University.

(ii) The University’s Standard and Poor’s credit rating had been improved.

(iii) Lancashire and the Sheffield City region had been selected among the first areas to take part in the Science and Innovation Audits (SIA), which was a good example of the University working with LEP partners. The Vice-Chancellor thanked the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) for his work on the submission to the competitive process established by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills.

(iv) The University’s letter from HEFCE had been favourable, and included a sustained level of HEIF funding, which was good news.

(v) The Athena Swan accreditation process was continuing across many departments, and the Chemistry department had achieved a Bronze Award.

(vi) A partnership agreement had been reached with the trade unions

(vii) Lancaster University had won the Roses competition, and the Vice-Chancellor noted his congratulations to everyone who had taken part.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the Vice-Chancellor’s report.

CO.16/28 President of the Students’ Union: Report

Ref: CA.6; document: SEC/2016/2/0508

The President of the Students’ Union introduced his written report. He added his congratulations to the Lancaster Roses team, and drew attention to the following points in his report.
(i) The Union was in the process of conducting a democratic review, and a referendum on the future governance structure would be held in Week 8 of term.

(ii) The Making Headlines conference had been highly successful, with guest speakers from all walks of life.

(iii) LUSU was considering its response to the White Paper.

(iv) The iLancaster app now included a hate crime reporting function, which had been created jointly by LUSU and ISS.

(v) The Union was developing a closer working relationship with the Colleges.

The Council resolved to thank Mr Hedley for the informative report and, noting this was his last meeting of Council, to wish him well for the future.

CO.16/29  Finance: Headline Budget 2016/17

Ref: CA.7

The Director of Finance gave a brief oral report on the budget, the full version of which was to be brought to the July meeting, along with the financial forecasts.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/APPROVAL

CO.16/30  Strategy

Ref: CA.8

(A) Update Report of the Development of Lancaster University College at Beijing Jiaotong University

Document: SEC/2016/2/0570

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) provided an update on the development of Lancaster’s international teaching and research partnership in Beijing. The Council noted that the infrastructure was largely in place, and that recruitment was underway for foundation students to begin studying in September 2016.
In response to members’ questions, it was noted that the University was under no obligation to work with BJTU’s other partners, and that an Academic Dean would be appointed as soon as possible. The portfolio of subjects might be expanded after twelve months, following a Ministry of Education review.

The Council resolved to thank Professor Bradley for the report and to receive further updates in due course.

(b) **Strategic Partnership Opportunity**

Document: PAS/16/040 (*Restricted and Commercial in Confidence*)

(c) **Storm Desmond**

Document: SEC/2016/2/0567

The Council received and discussed a report on the lessons learned following the severe storm and power outages experienced in December 2016. This report was requested at the previous meeting, and had been created as part of the incident management process.

The following points were noted during the discussion.

(i) The incident’s level of severity had exceeded all emergency plan practice exercises, but demonstrated that the investment which had already been made into the University’s emergency planning processes had been worthwhile.

(ii) The main area of failure which was identified was the lack of efficient communication plans and clarity of roles.

(iii) The report also identified an overreliance on telephony as a point of failure during the power outage.

(iv) Lines of communication had been improved with external bodies such as Electricity Northwest and the local resilience forum, as a direct result of the incident.
Several Lancaster academics had participated in a Royal Academy of Engineering conference on resilience, and a report had been submitted to the Disasters Emergency Committee. A copy of this report would be made available to the Council members following the meeting.

**Action: Secretary**

It was agreed that the University had emerged relatively well from the incident, thanks to the significant commitment of staff who were present at the time.

The Council resolved to note the report and to request an update on the progress made in implementing the report’s recommendations in May 2017.

**Action: Chief Administrative Officer and Secretary**

**CO.16/31 Governance**

*Ref: CA.9*

**(A) REPORT OF THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

*Document: SEC/2016/2/0553*

The Council resolved to approve the recommendations of the Nominations Committee as set out in the report.

**(B) CURRENT SCHEDULE OF FUTURE COUNCIL BUSINESS**

*Document: SEC/2016/2/0509*

The Council resolved to note the schedule of future business and requested an additional report on the University’s international strategy.

**Action: Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International)**

**CO.16/32 Human Resources: Industrial Action and Our Preparations in Lancaster**

*Ref: CA.10; document: SEC/2016/2/0573*

The Council received and discussed a report on the upcoming industrial action. It was agreed that the University should continue to try to mitigate the impact on students wherever possible. The Council noted that these
issues may continue to arise on an annual basis due to the nature of the national pay negotiations.

ITEMS TO RECEIVE

CO.16/33 Update to Measures of Success

Ref: CA.11; document: PSU/2016/0037

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the update report on the number of postgraduate research (PGR) students per academic, and the widening participation benchmark data. The Chair stated that it would be helpful for the Council to have a report on the actions being taken to achieve the targets on student recruitment from low participation neighbourhoods.

Action: Chief Administrative Officer and Secretary

CO.16/34 Date of Next Meeting

The Council noted that the next meeting will take place on **Friday 8 July 2016** at **9.00 a.m.** in the **Private Dining Room, County College**, with a dinner on the evening of **Thursday 7 July 2016** at **7.00 p.m.**