

Council

18 March 2014

Minutes

Present: Professor M Spyer (Chair)
Mr M Amer
Mr A Bicknell
Professor A Clark
Mr M Draper
Ms K Horvers
Professor P Hughes
Mr D Kennedy
Professor A Kent
Professor P Kopelman
Mr C North
Professor F Ross
Ms C Swarbrick
Mr G Turner
Professor J Weinberg
Professor N Wright

In attendance: Mr M Bery, Chief Operating Officer
Mrs S Bowen, Secretary & Academic Registrar
Mrs W Brewer, Joint Director of Human Resources
Ms S Trubshaw, Clerk to Council & Head of GLAS
Mr J Unsworth, Financial and Commercial Director
Mr T White, Director of Strategic Plannin

Apologies for absence were received from: Professor B Gusterson, Ms S Rimmer, Mr C Smallwood, Mr M Stevens and Ms L Wellburn

70. Minutes

Considered and approved:

The **Confidential** Minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2014.

Paper Council/4/A

71. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters of substance arising from the minutes.

72. Report from the Principal

Received:

A report from the Principal.

Reported:

That all HEIs had been informed by HEFCE about likely cuts to T funding for 2014-2015. HEFCE had indicated that they would try to protect high cost subjects as far as possible. The reduction in T funding would impact upon SGUL. Funding had been provided for mitigation to ease the reduction in funding, and SGUL qualified to apply for mitigation funding. Further discussions would be held with HEFCE shortly.

Paper Council/4/B

73. Students' Union Report

Reported:

- (i) That a 'Refreshers Fair' had been held for the first time at the beginning of the term and this had gone well.
- (ii) That the Environment and Ethics Office had submitted a Green Impact Work Book. The bid had been unsuccessful this year, but a further bid was planned for the following year.
- (iii) That the SU was developing an Office Manager role description and an application had been submitted to the Staffing Review Committee for consideration on 24 March 2014. It was hoped that the role would provide continuity in the Students' Union, and would relieve some of the administrative burden on the Sabbatical Officers.
- (iv) That following a review, the Eddie Wilson's contract would be re-tendered during the summer.
- (v) That a number of events had been held during RAG week and £8000 had been raised for charity.
- (vi) That the student body had been pleased to be involved in the visit of the Chancellor, HRH The Princess Royal on 28 February 2014.
- (vii) That a number of student shows had taken place or were underway, including the musical 'The Tale of Two Cities'.
- (viii) That there were a number of upcoming events, including a student music and dance competition called 'Face Off'. SGUL was hoping to replicate the success of 2013.
- (ix) That the sports teams were continuing to perform well including the men's hockey team who had won its league, and the women's football team which had also won its league competition.

Health and Safety

74. Health and Safety Issues

Received:

A report from the Safety Management Committee, and any issues that have arisen since the meeting of Council held on 17 December 2013.

Reported:

- (i) That the Safety Management Committee had reviewed the Governance arrangements of the Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) office. It had been agreed that these remained fit for purpose.
- (ii) That the SHE office Risk Register had been considered at the last meeting with a focus on the higher scoring risks. The Risk Register would be reviewed at each meeting.
- (iii) That a Working Group had been established to review the business case for the Liquid Nitrogen Storage Facility.
- (iv) That consideration was being given to the provision of fire safety training across SGUL.
- (v) That it was noted that the Biological Research Facility (BRF) staff had reported stress and fatigue, and the lack of opportunity to take annual leave.

Occupational Health would be liaising with staff in the BRF to address issues of health and well-being.

- (vi) That Council members were interested in the BRF and asked for further information.

Agreed:

That a paper on the Biological Research Facility would be presented to Council at a future meeting.

Paper Council/4/C

Supporting the Strategic Plan

75. Refreshing the Strategic Plan

Considered:

A draft agenda for the Council Away Day on 11 April 2014.

Reported:

That following a number of conversations the agenda had been amended, and the sessions on education and research had been changed over. It was also noted that a number of Council members had been invited to assist with the day, including both the preparation and facilitation of the meeting. There would be a financial focus throughout the day.

Agreed:

That a revised agenda would be circulated to Council members as soon as possible.

Paper Council/4/D

76. Strategic Futures

Considered:

- (i) Report from the Strategic Futures Project Steering Board
- (ii) Strategic Futures Risk Register

Reported:

That SGUL had reached the end of a long period of consultation, and the 'End of Consultation' document had been published. The allocation of academic staff to Institutes, had now concluded, and a small number of staff were now at risk of redundancy.

In accordance with SGUL's procedures staff at risk would be considered at the meeting of the Staffing Review Committee (SRC) on 24 March 2014. Recommendations from the SRC would be considered at the Redundancy Committee on 3 April 2014, and ratified at Council on 11 March 2014.

Overall the number of staff leaving the organisation, through a number of mechanisms would be approximately 24, dependent on any further redeployment opportunities, and subject to final confirmation.

The Strategic Futures Project Steering Board would continue to meet to consider the outstanding issue of performance management, and professional services and how the latter could be integrated with the Institutes to improve effectiveness. The Project Steering Board would also continue to monitor the Risk Register and the Project Plan. Following the latest review of the Strategic Futures Risk Register a number of risks had been closed or the scores reduced.

Further reported:

- (i) It was noted that 22 staff had applied for Voluntary Severance, and after consideration voluntary severance had been offered to 14 members of staff, one of whom declined to accept the offer.
- (ii) The cost of severance payments in 2013-2014 would be £750k, but the payback in 2014-2015 would be circa £1.75 million. This included the required £1.5 million savings. Further cost improvements would be required in 2014-2015, and this issue would be addressed during the Planning Round in April/May.

Paper Council/4/E

77. Strategic Plan Monitoring (Key Performance Indicators)

Received:

The Key Performance Indicators.

Reported:

That there had been no changes to the overall status of indicators since the previous report to Council, as the data supporting many of the indicators was only reported annually. Following the Strategic Plan refresh it might be possible to adopt a more mobile set of KPIs.

It was noted that the Research KPI remained red in the current report. In relation to this the Dean of Research and Enterprise reported that two MRC grants applications had recently been successful and would bring c. £1 million in funding to SGUL. It was suggested that the 'Budget' KPI should be red under the current circumstances given the outturn for the year was near breakeven. It was suggested that this could be discussed further at the Away Day.

It was also noted that there was some dissonance between the Strategic Risk Register (Paper P) and the KPIs, and that following the Strategic Plan refresh all efforts would be made to align the two reports.

Agreed:

That further consideration would be given to the Financial KPIs at the Away Day on 11 April 2014.

Paper Council/4/F

Financial Matters

78. BIS Funding letter to HEFCE

Received:

A copy of the BIS Funding letter to HEFCE. (See Minute 72 above.)

Paper Council/4/G

79. Financial Matters

Received:

The following reports from the Chief Operating Officer and the Finance and Commercial Director.

- (i) [A report from the Chair of the Finance Committee \(meeting held on 27 February 2014\)](#)

Reported:

University of Nicosia

That the University of Nicosia had concluded that the licence agreement proposed by SGUL was unaffordable, and UNic would develop its own MBBS5 degree aimed primarily at the Greek market. UNic had invited SGUL to quality assure the degree and SGUL would charge a fee for this process. At the same time the contract for the MBBS4 was under negotiation with a strong likelihood that the fee and the profit share would increase to the benefit of SGUL. Further details would be discussed at Finance Committee.

Estates and Facilities

That there continued to be discussion and negotiation with SGHT in relation to space. This would also be discussed further at the next meeting of Finance Committee.

Work was underway with SGHT with regard to the steam meters to verify any overpayment by SGUL and to receive reimbursement from SGHT. There would be further discussion at the next meeting of Finance Committee.

Analytical Services

That the meeting arranged for the Chair of Council, the Principal, the Chief Operating Officer with ASI directors had been cancelled by ASI. A further meeting had been arranged for 26 March 2014. Advice had also been sought from Mills & Reeve, SGUL's solicitors, who had provided an agenda for the meeting.

Paper Council/4/H

(ii) Financial Report for the six months ending 31 January 2014

Reported:

That a more detailed financial paper had been circulated at the request of Council. The current year end forecast was £67k surplus. The outturn was still subject to a number of risks.

The following points were noted:

- (a) That overhead recovery on research grants to date was lower than expected.
- (b) That all recruitment to posts was considered on a case by case basis by the Staffing Review Committee (SRC), which recognised the savings requirement.
- (c) That there was considerable long term debt owed by SGHT. It was noted that this impacted more on cash flow. All debt had been provided for in the forecast.
- (d) That a plan was being implemented with SGHT which would remove the need for invoicing for staff charges, which in future would be agreed on an annual basis.

Paper Council/4/I

(I) A report on proposals for cost improvements

Reported:

That the proposals were noted. There would be further discussion at SPARC which would be incorporated into the discussions at the Away Day on 11 April 2014.

Paper Council /4/J

Governance

80. CUC Code of Governance

Considered:

The draft CUC Code of Governance.

Reported:

That it was noted that the new Code of Governance had adopted an approach based on a set of values and a set of key principles. The principles were underpinned by sub-principles, statements and directives.

The following points were noted:

That the structure could be made clearer by adopting the format of the UK Code of Governance.

That the section on Equality and Diversity had been strengthened in the new code. It was reported that SGUL was fully compliant with its public disclosure duties and went beyond the basic requirements. SGUL welcomed the strengthening of this section. It was also noted that there were still five outstanding responses to the Council Equality and Diversity questionnaire.

The requirement for transparency was noted. SGUL endeavoured to publish Council minutes in a timely manner subject to the resources available to undertake this task. It was also a requirement under the Standing Orders of Council to publish the minutes on the external website. It was suggested that perhaps Council meetings should be open to observers, including members of the public. It was felt that this proposal might have the unintended result of moving the majority of business to a reserved agenda. SGUL strove to avoid the use of reserved agendas at any of its meetings in the spirit of both transparency and openness within the Institution.

It was also noted that the CUC Code made reference to the need to adhere to the spirit as well as the letter of the code. It was felt that this sentiment had not been embedded in any significant way within the Code.

It was noted that other parts of the code had been adopted from the previous version, and did not differ significantly.

Agreed:

- (i) That any further comments on the draft CUC Code should be sent to Susan Trubshaw, Clerk to Council for incorporation in the SGUL's response to the consultation.
- (ii) That all Council Members were asked to ensure that they had returned their equality and diversity questionnaires.

Paper Council /4/K

Partnerships

81. International Reports

Received:

The following reports:

- (i) INTO SGUL

That obtaining clinical placement sites in the US remained a key concern. The recent bid to Mount Sinai Hospital, Chicago, had been turned down. Other opportunities were being actively pursued.

(ii) University of Nicosia, Cyprus

That the contract was currently being renegotiated. The income from the project was noted. It was suggested that the relevant costs should also be included alongside the income.

Agreed:

That both projects would be discussed further at the Council Away Day on 11 April 2014.

Paper Council/4/L

Education and Research

82. NSS

Received:

A report on the NSS and the implementation of the Action Plan.

Reported:

That the NSS 2014 would close in April. Activities were underway to encourage students to complete the questionnaire. The action plan continued to be implemented with a focus on MBBS students, as other programmes, particularly those based in FHSCE had historically enjoyed good results. Discussions were continuing with SGHT with regard to the final year placements to ensure that excellent teaching was being provided. Dr Jo Brown had been appointed as Academic Director of the Student Experience, and she was providing enthusiastic support in this area.

It was noted that the 'Talking to Me' events had proved successful. Students had been asked their opinion with regard to communication methods. Clicker devices had been provided for rapid feedback at the meetings. Some key messages had emerged:

- Please communicate more
- Do not send emails - bulletins or text messages were preferred
- All students had devices which could be used more for communication
- More communication from course teams would be appreciated.

Additionally a survey covering all students across all years would soon be launched and this would be overseen by the Student Experience Working Group.

Paper Council/4/M

83. Recruitment

Received:

A report on recruitment for entry in 2014-2015.

Reported:

That SGUL was currently in the middle of the Recruitment Cycle. It was noted that there had been 2344 applications for 259 places on MBBS programmes. Interviews were underway and some offers had been made. The deadline for applications to other programmes was 15 January 2014, except for INTO SGUL HE courses which would close at the end of May 2014. Applications to SGUL INTO programmes were 25-30% up compared to the same time last year.

The application cycle for postgraduate recruitment had just begun. It was noted that it was a difficult national environment for funding for postgraduate students.

It was noted that home students could not be directed to apply for the INTO SGUL programmes because they would not qualify to practise in the UK. In addition there was strict controls in relation to medical student numbers because of the number of places available on the Foundation Programme, which medical graduates needed to undertake

in order to become licensed to practise (eg registered with the GMC). It was possible that this might change as discussions were currently underway with regard to 'Registration at the time of Graduation'. There were a number of issues to be considered before this could be implemented if agreed at national level. This would include the requirement to amend the Medical Act. It was unlikely that this would be considered further during this parliamentary term, and it was more likely to happen after the next general election.

It was noted that the cap on overseas numbers might be removed and this would open up opportunities for SGUL. There would be further discussion about the implications of this change at the Council Away Day on 11 April 2014.

Paper Council/4/N

84. Research Away Day

Reported:

That the Research Away Day held on 26 February 2014 had been very successful with 90 members of staff attending plus a number of members of Council. Consideration had been given to developing strategies for Research Institutes including strategies for growth. A follow-up survey had been conducted, and one aspect of the day had stood out for all of those who had responded, and that was the appreciation of the contribution of the Independent Council members to the Research Day.

Audit and Risk Management

85. Audit Committee

Received:

A report from the Chair of the Audit Committee (meeting held on 25 February 2014).

Paper Council/4/O

86. Risk Management and Efficiency

Received:

- (i) The Summary Risk Register
- (ii) The Key Risk Indicator Table and commentary on changes to the risk scores following the meeting of the Risk Management and Efficiency Committee on 12 February 2014.

Agreed:

That the local INTO SGUL Key Risk Indicator table that had been provided to Audit Committee would be circulated to Council Members for information.

Paper Council/4/P

Human Resources

87. Human Resources

Received:

A report from the Human Resources Committee.

Reported:

That pay negotiations for 2013-2014 had not yet been concluded, although SGUL had, like most other HEIs implemented the 1% pay increase. Further action had been planned involving a boycott on assessment; SGUL had agreed to abide by the advice published by UCEA with regard to the deduction of pay for any industrial action. This year's pay negotiations had begun (2014-2015) and the current offer by the employers was 1%.

Paper Council/4/Q

Matters for Approval and Report

88. Award of Title

Approved:

The award of the title of Emeritus Professor of Molecular Vaccinology to Professor Martin Cranage, Institute of Infection and Immunity, with effect from 1 May 2014.

89. Action by the Chair - Student Case

Reported:

The agreement that an Appeals Committee should be established in accordance with the *Procedure for consideration for a final discretionary attempt at an assessment*.

Other Matters

90. Minutes of Meetings

Committee	Date of Meeting	Available from:
Audit Committee	15 February 2014	By email from s.trubshaw@sgul.ac.uk
Risk Management & Efficiency Committee	12 February 2014	By email from s.durkin@sgul.ac.uk
Finance Committee	22 January 2014 27 February 2014	Paper/Council/4/R
SPARC	18 December 2013 15 January 2014 19 February 2014	By email from s.trubshaw@sgul.ac.uk
Senate	24 February 2014	By email from d.baldwinson@sgul.ac.uk
Human Resources Committee	TBC	By email from mbentley@sgul.ac.uk

HEFCE and other External Matters

91. HEFCE Letters and Consultations and other External Consultations for Information

Received:

A report on HEFCE letters and consultations and other external consultations, with responses to date.

Paper Council/4/S

92. Any other business

93. Dates of meetings 2012-2014

Friday 11 April 2014 – Away Day –
Physiological Society
Tuesday 1 July 2014
Tuesday 21 October 2014
Tuesday 25 November 2014
Tuesday 16 December 2014
Tuesday 17 March 2015
Friday 24 April 2015 – Away Day
Tuesday 7 July 2015

Tuesday 20 October 2015
Tuesday 24 November 2015
Tuesday 15 December 2015
Tuesday 15 March 2016
Friday 22 April 2016 – Away Day
Tuesday 5 July 2016
Tuesday 18 October 2016
Tuesday 22 November 2016
Tuesday 13 December 2016

ST/19 March 2014