

School of Technology

Council of the School

2.00 p.m. on Friday, 25 October 2019

Conference Room, Civil Engineering Building

UNRESERVED MINUTES

- Present:
- Professor John Dennis (Chair)
 - Professor Lisa Hall
 - Professor Ann Copestake
 - Professor Christoph Loch
 - Dame Polly Courtice

 - Professor Holger Babinsky
 - Professor Andrew Flewitt
 - Professor Simon Guest
 - Professor Tim Minshall
 - Professor Simon Godsill

 - Dr Sam Ainsworth

 - Mr Tek Kan Chung (Undergraduate member)

 - Professor Garth Wells (School observer)

 - Dr Shui Lam (Secretary)
 - Ms Joanna Walmsley (Interim School Finance Manager)
 - Dr Patrick Barrie (Director of Education)
 - Ms Gabby Uncles (School Assistant Administrator)
- Apologies:
- Professor Richard Prager, Professor Alex Routh, Professor Alastair Beresford, Professor Vincent Mak, Professor Robin Langley, Professor Richard Penty.

The Chair welcomed Professor Penty as Deputy Head of School and Dr Barrie as Director of Education to their first meeting. He also welcomed Professor Simon Godsill as Head of Engineering Division F.

Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1. Minutes

The unreserved minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2019 were approved.

1.1. Matters Arising

On 24 September 2019, the Secretary consulted the Council of the School, by email, over the business case for the refurbishment of CISL at 1 Regent Street, Paper **T/19/42**. The responses received were supportive, but there were some queries. Having considered the queries, the Chair and the Secretary deemed the proposal to be approved by the Council of the School by circulation, subject to the following conditions being met:

- (1) No loan has been requested by CISL from the University in the business case. Should a loan be considered desirable at a later date, the arrangement would be between CISL and the University. The School would not underwrite the loan without seeking advice from the Council of the School.
- (2) To minimise the risk of project over-run of costs, the School will require the EM project manager, a CISL representative, the School's Finance Manager and a PRAO officer to have regular monthly meetings to monitor and review project expenditure.
- (3) The School will ask the Finance Manager to investigate with CISL a reasonable threshold below which CISL reserves should not fall. The School will also require the annual reports of CISL to contain the relevant high-level financial information to enable the Council of the School to monitor the financial health of CISL.
- (4) In the event of extreme circumstances the University would consult the donor and take legal advice as necessary.

Recently, it has transpired that the ESIF grant required the University to seal a restrictive covenant for the use of either the whole, or a part of 1 Regent Street. It was reported that this matter was being considered by central management currently. At the meeting, Dame Polly commented that there was flexibility in the covenant so this issue is unlikely to cause a problem for the University.

1.2. Membership of the Council of the School

The Council of the School agreed on a policy to co-opt the Deputy Head of School and the Director of Education to the Council of the School as members.

Therefore, the current Director of Education, Dr Barrie, was co-opted to the end of December 2020. It was noted the Deputy Head of School, Professor Penty, was already a member, by co-option as a member of the [University] Council, and therefore, it was not necessary to co-opt him again. The new membership is shown in Paper **T/19/43**.

Dr Barrie joined the meeting at this point.

Chair's Report

The Head of School provided a verbal report:

1. REF: The feedback to the mock REF submissions in the School had mostly been good. However, there was still some work to do for the UoA 12 Environment Statement. Impact Case Studies were good, but some 100-word justifications for each Output still needed to be completed. The criteria of “best” papers might not just be academically excellent papers: impact and follow-on funding etc. has to be considered too.
2. The two recent visits from the Vice-Chancellor were both reported as being a great success: the Whittle Lab in July 2019 and in the Civil Engineering building in September 2019, both of which included talks on research across the School. The Vice-Chancellor was impressed with both visits and a follow-up meeting has been held with the VC to formulate a plan for the development of AI/ML based on a strategy proposed by Prof. Copestake.
3. The School Away Day had been held in July 2019 and the ideas discussed at the meeting were included in the Academic Vision (see item 3.1).
4. At the recent PRC meeting, it was reported that no more than £100m would be expected to be spent on projects in the next 5 years. With large projects recently committed and others in the pipeline it was important for the Department of Engineering to show some progress with fundraising for the Whittle project.

Dr Barrie reported that:

1. He had started service as Director of Education for the School in September and had engaged on a fact finding mission on education within the School.
2. A major part of his role was communications - both “top down” and “bottom up” between academics and the administrative centre.
3. General Board Education Committee was reviewing the regulations for part-time degrees and considering what should be the requirements for non-standard non-residential courses.
4. Undergraduate Admissions Committee was considering how to implement the Access & Participation Plan submitted by the University and approved by the Office for Students.
5. Postgraduate Admissions Committee was reviewing postgraduate admissions procedures and postgraduate funding in the hope that these could be coordinated better in future.

2. Starred Items

The Committee approved the starred items.

3. Strategic Business

3.1. Academic Vision

At the meeting, it was reported that the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Planning and Strategy), Professor Cardwell, has requested a summary academic vision from Schools by the end of September 2019. A short extension has been granted to allow the Schools to consult.

The Head of School and the Secretary of the School produced a draft academic vision and consulted the Needs Committee and the Director of Education. A revised document, taking into account all the comments received so far, was produced in Paper **T/19/44**.

The Council of the School agreed that it would be helpful to have a distinct purpose for the West Cambridge site as a campus: an innovation district for Science and Technology.

The Council of the School also agreed to amend the sentence related to equality and diversity in the workforce across academic staff to be more inline with University aspirations. The Chair agreed to revise the document accordingly.

Therefore, the Council of the School approved academic vision for submission.

3.2. Strategy and Planning Committee

At the meeting, the Head of the School proposed replacing the Needs Committee with a Strategy and Planning Committee, with the terms of reference given in Paper **T/19/45**. The membership of the Committee was agreed to be the same as that for the Needs Committee, but with a focus on developing and implementing a coherent strategy for the School. This has been approved by the Needs Committee.

The proposal was endorsed by the Council of the School.

3.3. Research Committee

At the meeting, the Head of the School reported that the Research Committee proposed a set of revised terms of reference (Paper **T/19/46**) to facilitate more research grant income. The Council of the School approved the revised terms of reference.

The Head of School informed the Council of the School that the School has recruited to a four-year fixed-term post of Research Strategy Facilitator to support this work in the first instance.

3.4. School Research Seed Fund

At the meeting on 8 July 2019, the Research Committee endorsed a proposal from the Head of School to establish a School Research seed fund to initiate strategic activity in areas of critical importance. The Needs Committee has considered the proposal and agreed to allow £80k to the School Research Seed Fund in the first instance, see Paper **T/19/47**.

The Research Committee would be responsible for the application process. A query was raised as to whether the fund will be responsive or would allocate strategically. It was agreed that the School wished to use the fund intelligently and that the Research Strategy Facilitator might be able to help construct proposals of strategic interest to the School.

4. Straightforward Business

4.1. SRR CEB Report

The General Board considered the Strategic Research Review of CEB at the meeting on 28 November 2018. The Board endorsed the development and implementation of the panel's recommendation and requested a progress report in the Michaelmas Term 2019.

Professor Lisa Hall, Head of Department of CEB, presented her report (Paper **T/19/48**) starting with the core recommendation to restructure the technical support within the Department. The Council of the School acknowledged that a review of the Department was overdue and that lessons should be learned regarding lack of continual staff training and that research has changed direction, meaning heavy workshops were no longer needed. It was recognised that the new, streamlined approach would be good.

A discussion followed on the possibility of a site-wide workshop for the departments at West Cambridge. Professor Dennis reported on a West Cambridge Working Group whose remit would cover facilities where resources for shared use between Departments/Schools and the University as a whole could be proposed (this could cover research and teaching but caution was given to possible loss of local needs).

It was suggested, after some discussion, that the Schools of Technology and Physical Sciences might take the lead of finding out what *would* be useful on the West Cambridge site. After the success of obtaining funds for the Dyson building, it was agreed that Professor Dennis would talk to CUDAR regarding similar ventures.

4.2. Planning Round 2019

It was reported that the process by the University undertakes planning was still under development by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Strategy and Planning). In the

meantime an interim solution for Planning Round 2019 has been agreed with PRC at its meeting on 26 June 2019: Paper **T/19/49**.

Current planning assumptions are that Chest allocations for 2010/21 would be as forecast in the current Budget Report, except as determined by the operation of the Income Incentivisation Model. Schools and Departments would be expected to manage their overall operating budgets within the forecast plan for 2020/21.

Pay awards have been assumed as 1.8% for August 2019, and forecast at 2% per annum during the planning period from 2020-21 to 2022-24. Inflation on non-pay expenditure should also be assumed at 2% per annum.

However, Chest allocations were expected to grow at 1% per year from 2020-21 onwards. This gap between 1.8% / 2% increases in pay and non-pay, and 1% increase in UEF funding would lead to significant savings target in later years of the plan.

The Council of the School noted the information in Paper **T/19/49**.

4.3. Planning: Planned Undergraduate Student Numbers

The School was required to submit forecast undergraduate student numbers for 2019-20 to 2023-24 to the Planning and Resource Allocation Office by 31 October 2019.

Dr Barrie explained that the planned numbers in Paper **T/19/50** had been prepared using realistic assumptions from Departments. The numbers were approved by the Council of the School.

It was noted that the planned postgraduate student numbers for 2019-20 to 2023-24 would be considered at the next Strategy and Planning Committee meeting on 19 November 2019.

4.4. End of Year Accounts 2018-19

The 2018-19 Year end accounts for the School presented to the Needs Committee are detailed in paper **T/19/51**.

The School Finance Manager drew the attention of the Council of the School to the growth in surplus over the last three years.

A discussion followed around the likelihood of growth in other one-off sources of income (i.e. not chest or research income), areas which had seen a recent trajectory of increases year on year. The Interim Finance Manager would be available to discuss any specific queries regarding the accounts.

The Interim Finance Manager also strongly requested that members of the Council input to the Finance Business Transformation Programme Survey and World Cafes, which Professor Dennis endorsed.

4.5. Health and Safety Matters

The Council of the School raised no Health and Safety matters.

4.6. Risk Assessment

The Council of the School agreed to reflect the risks related to the refurbishment of CISL in the School's risk register.

5. *Minutes of Other Committees**

Needs Committee	15 October 2019	T/19/53
Graduate School Committee	22 May 2019	T/19/54

6. Any Other Business

There was no further business.

7. Dates of Future Meetings 2019-20

2.00 p.m. in Board Room, Department of Engineering:
Friday, 29 November 2019

2.00 p.m. in Large Meeting Room, Department of Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology:
Friday, 31 January 2020

2.00 p.m. in Room W2.01, Judge Business School:
Friday, 06 March 2020

2.00 p.m. in Board Room, Department of Engineering:
Friday, 08 May 2020

2.00 p.m. in FW11, Computer Laboratory:
Friday, 12 June 2020